

History of Halifax Massachusetts

By

GUY S. BAKER



HALIFAX CENTER AS IT APPEARED ABOUT 1903

HALIFAX *** PLYMOUTH COUNTY *** MASSACHUSETTS



Guy S. Baker
635 Plymouth Street
Halifax, Mass. 02338

— \$12.50

A horizontal scale bar with markings at 10, 100, 200, and 300 Knots.

[illegible]

SURVEYED & DRAWN BY S. THOMPSON IN

1832.

Barrett Lithography

HISTORY OF HALIFAX, MASSACHUSETTS

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Guy S. Baker — 1976 — Town Historian

INTRODUCTION

It has long been my continuing hope that the story of Halifax would someday be recorded in a readable and hopefully an interesting manner. Ours has been a long career as a township and we relinquish seniority to but few other townships in the entire community of Plymouth County, as well as other parts of early America.

My association with my birthplace has gone on virtually uninterrupted for a goodly part of a century—more than three score years and ten, and approaching the time when I will admit to four score years of close association with Halifax, Massachusetts 02338. To keep the record straight, I must confess that it has been necessary for me to reside in communities apart from my home town for some of these years.

My birth in the last part of the 19th century has made it possible for me to have had acquaintance in my early years with relatives and fellow townspeople whose span of life has spread across the entire stretch of the 1800's. Actually, this is not an old country by worldly standards, and our history is young. Nonetheless, such dropping off of a generation makes a small ridge over which the view becomes increasingly obscure and faded. And all attempts are deserving that will help to establish an authentic image of the span that lays in our "Wake."

In this frame of mind I have taken up the task of recording that part of our actions of the past from as far back as I can reach. Needless to say, the entire span cannot be covered in detail. Searching records and reviewing the written accounts of Halifax history—that good fortune has brought to my attic—have done much to make an accounting of our past seem worthwhile and, also, interesting. There is no denying my intense pleasure in performing this task and my only concern is that it will prove valuable to those who take it in hand desiring to know more about "Our Town."

In the capacity of Town Historian, one receives many requests that place him squarely in the category of a genealogist. It's a pleasant duty and a frequently rewarding one since I often come across snatches of information about Halifax and the people who lived here in the long ago. They had the "calling of the tune," so to speak and it has been very interesting to record their activities. The early records have much to do with military endeavors. This fact has been important to me in building the story of our past. In my research I have made acquaintance with many pleasant people from varied fields. They come to me with personal requests to establish birth dates. And there are even those who are curious about their family tree. These and many other

interests seemed to have involved me in many avenues of endeavor and at this stage I wish to confess that I, too, can best be tagged as a "curiosity shop." This alone is possibly the motivating force behind my interest in tracking down "family lines."

In these days the completeness of coverage of events and the ease of recording things as they happen make it easy to build a fund of material that is at one's fingertips. Something is needed to aid in the retention of the substance of our past to prevent the flight that sweeps by us so quickly causing us to miss much and "overloading our circuits."

Among my close neighbors were some veterans of the Civil War. In some instances, the parents of these men were born before this nation was born. My grandparents were also a rich source of information which they had acquired first hand or heard via word of mouth from their own ancestors. Exposure to such a prolific source of background, along with an interest in what went on before has given me a continuing interest in things historical, particularly things that pertain to Halifax.

It has been my good fortune to have had the complete cooperation of the three town clerks who have served Halifax since I began this history. Margaret Kilroy followed my first collaborator, Doris Hoinghaus. Ruth Perkins, the current holder of this office, has been of especial help in this work. Without her assistance this task might not have come to a completion.

I have always had the support and encouragement of the town officials who responded with aid to any request I have had. Credit must also be given to those who through the years kept the records of our first church and parish that came into existence as a copartner with the town on July 4, 1734. The officers of the church have been patient and helpful while I have searched through the unique collection of church material stored in the town vault in the basement of the Town Hall.

In summary, I have turned back all of the pages of my material, beginning with the sketchy past that only the true Americans—the Indians—knew and lived and that we, in turn, have shaped into a tradition giving us the Hiawathas, Pocahontases, Wamsuttas, Massasoits and King Philips. The picture has been horrified at times with the shadow of the tomahawk and the scalp-taking which, incidentally, the white man introduced to the Indian. These things and more form the vague silhouette that was the very early America. Our hosts, the Indians, could have been more inhospitable as we stalked onto their land, flaunting our firing pieces and stealing their corn. I have reviewed the explorations of the early settlers as they followed the streams that flowed through the uplands to reach the coastline. Thus did Captain Jones find Silver Lake. The waterways were the avenues of adventure to the heartlands that made up this country. Wamsutta traveled the great river to sojourn on the island in our twin lakes. The Hobomocks spread out over the upper regions that held the headwater of the North River. And into the midst of this, the first settlers of Halifax laid their foundations for shelter and, soon, their permanent homes. Through the stream of humans who have passed this way there have been woven strains identifying backgrounds from far away. Such is the case with all of us, I suspect, and my own line has been intermingled with the hosts that make up the parade.

I am a product of this grouping and what I put on these sheets is my digest as it has been processed in my head through this last three-quarters of a century. No causes or effects have been my aims—no desire to weigh the virtues of one period of time over another. I am not obsessed with the desire to compare—merely to get into recognizable form the many bits of information about our past that I have had the good fortune to come upon.

And so, I dedicate my efforts to all Haligonians and their friends who may be privileged to come among us and indicate an interest to acquire some knowledge of us, our past, our current status, and our hopes and prospects for the future.

CONTENTS

Introduction	7
Parish and Town Affairs	17
Churches	23
Schools	35
Libraries	55
Social.	61
Industry.	85
Stores	121
Military	127
Ways	149
Maps	169
Appendices	173
Index	187

ILLUSTRATIONS

Guy S. Baker — 1976 — Town Historian	5
Illustration by Edmund Churchill of First Meeting House	16
New Town Hall, Built in 1907	19
An Excerpt from 1792 Record Book	19
“Trunk Meeting House,” Corner of Wood, Fuller and Cedar Streets	22
The Congregational Church in the Early 1900’s	31
Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church	31
Congregational Church	32
Graduation Exercise Souvenir From Schoolhouse No. 3	34
No. 1 Schoolhouse, Corner of Plymouth and Monponsett Streets	36
Schoolhouse No. 3 on Thompson Street Near Summit Street	39
Standish Manor, the Residence of J. L. Jones	43
Central School, 1905	44
Central School, 1976	45
New Elementary School on Plymouth Street	46
Holmes Public Library — Founded in 1876	57
Holmes Public Library in 1976	57
Ticket from Halifax Militia Company Ball, 1871	60
Halifax Town Baseball Team — 1923	64
Plowing Contest During Old Home Day, 1907	66
Ready for a “Joy Ride”	66
Climbing Greased Pole During Old Home Day, 1900	68
Halifax Fair Scene, 1906	71
Halifax Sewing Circle — 1915	71
First Fire Station	74
Thompson Cemetery on Thompson Street	76
Dunbar Tavern on Plymouth Street	78
Wellsweep (on Thompson Street)	80
Gravestone Factory (on Thompson Street)	81
Monroe Chair Built by Benjamin Monroe	84
“Ye Olde Cotton Mill” — Built About 1800	86
Sturtevant Cemetery on Plymouth Street (1728)	88
Site of Porter Mill on River Street	93

Palmer Mill on Palmer Mill Road	95
King's Supermarket and Shopping Center	98
Halifax Country Club	100
Silver Lake Pumping Station in Halifax	105
The Halifax Railroad Station Built in 1845	106
Monponsett Station	106
Monponsett Hotel, Built in 1895	108
Monponsett Inn, Built in 1961	109
Monponsett Lakes Roadway and Bridge	110
Grove at West Lake, Monponsett, 1910	111
Halifax Garden Company Greenhouses and Superintendent's Home	112
Cranberry Harvesting on a Halifax Bog	115
The J. B. Baker Blacksmith Shop, Built in 1875	117
Ox Frame at J. B. Baker Blacksmith Shop	118
General Store, Halifax Center	120
Hayward's Corner	122
Rose's Boston Store	122
Grover's Corner About 1900	124
New Post Office — Began Service in 1976	125
Tomson Stone on Thompson Street	126
Tomson Gun, Used in 1675 in King Philip's War	129
Wamsutta Stone on White's Island	129
Pope's Tavern on Plymouth Street	130
Revolutionary War Monument Erected in 1911	131
Captain Charles Lyon's Clock	139
First Civil War Monument in Massachusetts, 1867	143
World War II Monument Dedicated in 1945	146
Monument Grounds on Plymouth Street	147
"The 12 Mile Stone" Marks the Halfway Point Between Plymouth and Brockton	148
Morton Place on Plymouth Street	152
Halifax Center — 1905	156
Surveyors Who Surveyed for a Canal, 1909-1910	156
Lindbergh's Reply to Halifax's Congratulatory Message	158
Timothy Wood House (Now Randall Home) on River Street	161
Standish Place (Now the Home of Albert W. Williams) on Palmer Mill Road	161
Just About a Quarter Century Ago in South Halifax	163
Morris Robbins at Plympton Green With His Oxen	163
Thompson Street Near the Winnetuxet River About 1900	164
Chauffeur Ernest Sturtevant at Home on Hemlock Lane in One of the First Automobiles in Halifax	166
Map of Halifax — 1734	168
Map of Halifax — 1832	170
Map of Present Day Town of Halifax	171

HALIFAX

By Nathaniel Morton

Graywacke and Granite is the geological formation of Halifax.

Prof. Hitchcock says of the former that "it is capable of being made some of the best land in the State."

Halifax is located near the center of the county; it is 28 miles from Boston and 12 miles from Plymouth. It contains 11,285 acres; 1700 of it water and about 200 swamp, abounding in beds of peat from 2 to 10 feet thick.

It was here in 1676, that Capt. Benj. Church "captured the Monponsetts and brought them in, not one escaping."

According to tradition, Mr. Sturtevant was the first settler, establishing himself near the residence of Thomas Holmes.

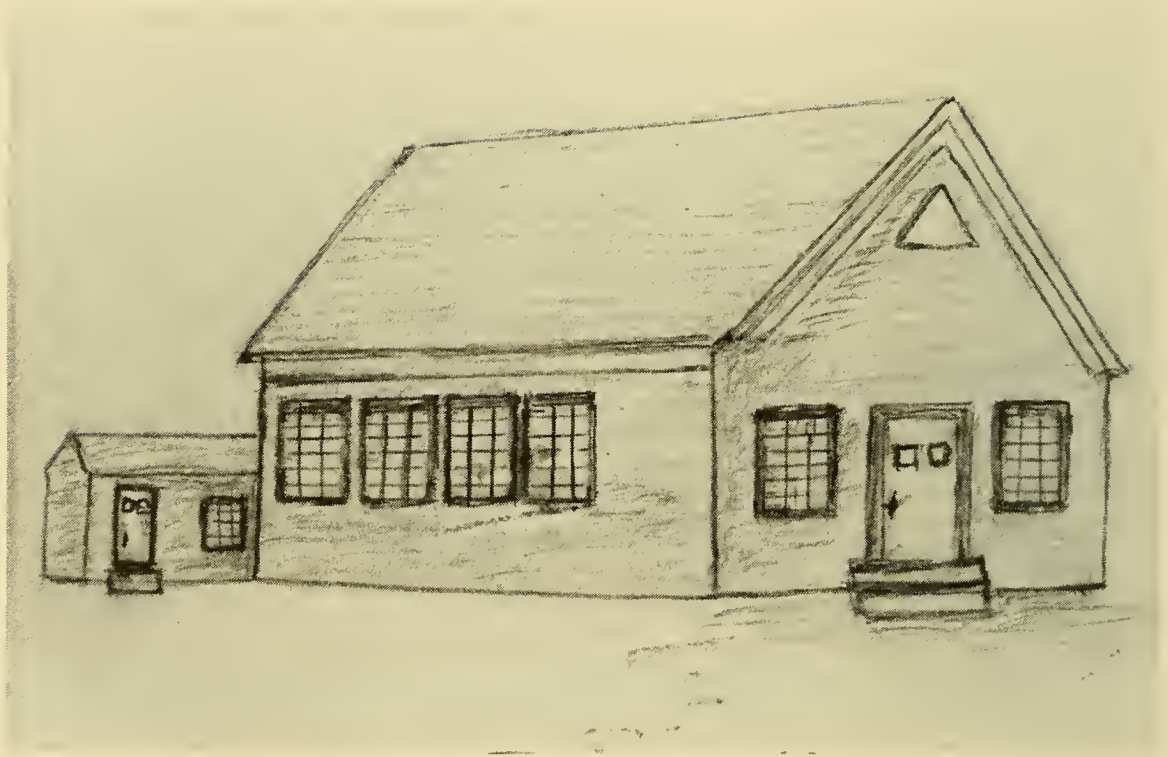


Illustration by Edmund Churchill of First Meeting House as described to him by his father.

PARISH AND TOWN AFFAIRS

Parish affairs were officially allied with town business. A regular poll tax was assessed to each member of the incorporated town to be collected annually in March or April and used for both parish and town purposes: The settlement, maintenance and support of ministers or public teachers of religion; the building or repairing of houses of public worship; and all other necessary parish charges came from tax collections. The parish funds were also used to pay the Public School Master for his services. The body of parish officials could commence and prosecute any action or suit to a final judgment in court proper. Also, the law provided the parish officials the right to defend charges against the parish and, as in the case of town procedure, gave the parish the privilege of defense attorneys.

Parish assessors were ruled by the same regulations as their parallel town counterparts, the town assessors. Likewise, the moderator of the parish meetings governed as did the Town Meeting moderator. The parish clerk seemed to have fewer duties than the town clerk. And, the responsibilities of the parish or church treasurer were somewhat less numerous than those of the town treasurer. Until about the middle of the 19th century, the dual duties of the "Power and Duty of the Town" and the "Power and Duty of the Parish" were interwoven to a considerable degree in this country. It was in 1852 that the Town of Halifax purchased the Meeting House from the parish and the present church building was erected. This pretty much accomplished the "Separation of Church and State."

By an act of the General Court of Boston, or at the seat of government of the combined Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colonies, the Town of Halifax was incorporated on July 4, 1734. As we have said, the early townships were characterized by the duality of the parish and the town. For the most part, the parish affairs were concerned with the religious practice of the early inhabitants. The other formal governing action of the citizens became known as the "civil" or town affairs.

A prerequisite for permission to form a township, as laid down by the General Court, was that a Meeting House be built before the petition would be granted. In the case of Halifax, however, the building was not completed until shortly after the town was incorporated. There is no explanation anywhere in the town records for this unorthodox transaction. Perhaps promises were made by petitioners and their judgment and integrity put above suspicion. At any rate, we can claim one more "first" in the distinguished history of Halifax.

The first Town Meeting was called by Ignatius Cushing. The first citizens to

be chosen town officers were selectmen Ignatius Cushing, Ebenezer Fuller and David Bosworth. Other officers were also chosen at this time.

In parish affairs, the parallel to the Town Meeting was the "gathering" of the church group to sign the covenant and select those officers who would serve as deacons. Samuel Sturtevant and David Bosworth were elected first deacons. The list of officers elected to both the town and the parish organizations in 1976 are so much longer than the original lists that one needs to ponder whether we are "overruled in parish affairs." In fairness to this reflection, it should be pointed out that many of those serving the town today are acting by appointment to positions and not by election as was the case in the first years of our democracy.

The powers held by church and town frequently overlapped in the early years, such as the hiring of the minister by the church body. The choice had to be confirmed by a vote taken at the town meeting as well. The minister's salary was paid from the appropriated funds raised by taxation since, as part of their duties, the early ministers were charged with teaching the children of the town.

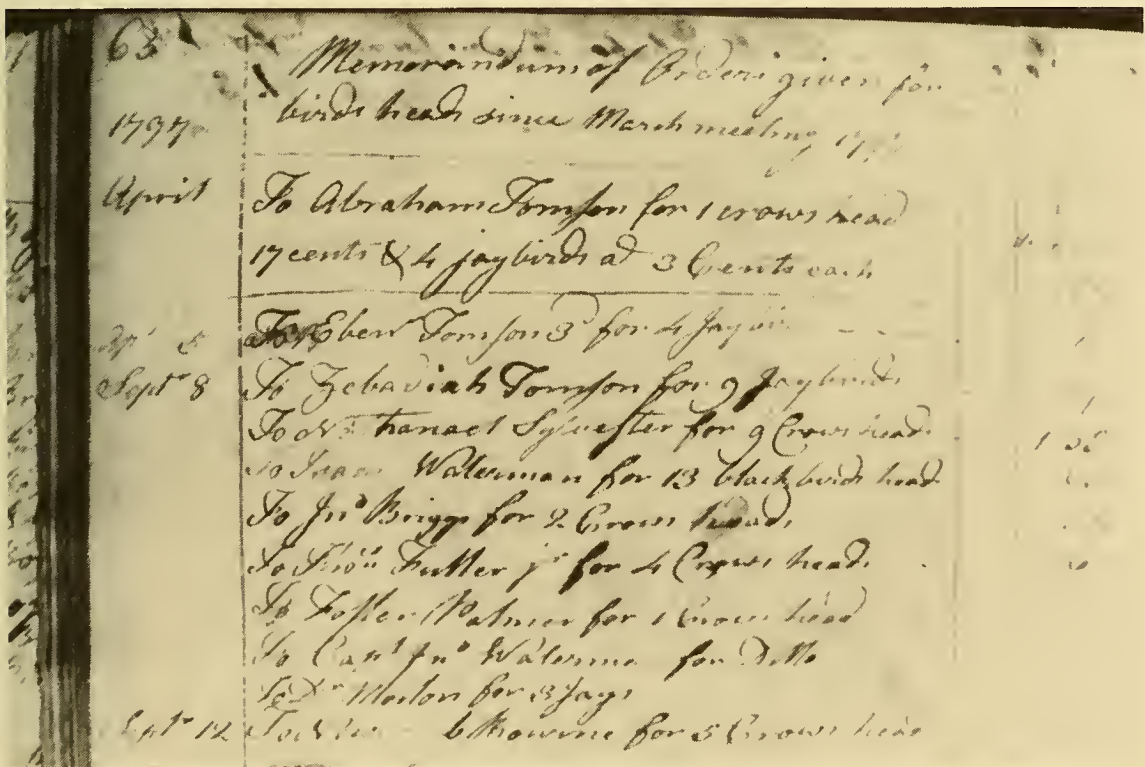
The sexton of the church also performed duties that, in a manner of speaking, fell outside the strict interpretation of the conduct of religious exercises. At the death of a parishioner, the sexton would toll the church bell counting out the age of the deceased in the number of times tolled. A passing during the night was rung at sunrise; a death occurring during the daylight hours was tolled at sunset. The sexton of the church also took official charge of procuring the shroud for wrapping the body for burial. Moreover, he maintained and drove the town hearse in which the deceased were carried to their burial places. The choice of gravesite was frequently not in the public cemetery but rather in a section of a homestead reserved for members of the family. We have four of these private cemeteries in our town now.

The tythingmen had extremely important duties and much more power in their close scrutiny of the behavior of town inhabitants. In the "Town Officers and their Powers and Duties," a manual dating back to 1818 citing laws that were enacted as far back as 1713, I found out that the tythingmen "Had to inspect all licensed houses and to inform of all disorders or misdemeanors which they shall discover or know to be committed in them, to a justice of the peace, or to a general session of the county; and also to all such as shall sell spirituous liquors without license." In reality, the tythingman was quite like our present policeman. A constable had similar powers. His attention was directed more to the civil affairs and transactions while the tythingman's jurisdiction and emphasis centered on breaches of the laws controlling church behavior and procedures, and of the moral code as laid down by regulations and practices of the church. We are aware, too, that the tythingman had definite responsibilities in seeing to the collection of tax assessments for church support. His presence at church services was mandatory in order that he enforce good decorum throughout the service.

In the early days, there were two sets of assessors in each town and parish. These were elected officers who established the tax rates and collected the monies for their respective uses. The tax collections were just a small part of the financial transactions of the business affairs of the early settlers. The commodities exchanged in trade with the purchasers of goods, both locally and from the outside, were vital to the healthy economy of the area. Thus, fair and



New Town Hall, built in 1907, near the site of the First Meeting House.



An excerpt from a legible page in 1792 Record Book.

reputable dealings were a must. To ensure proper dealings, a system of "Viewers" was set up. These agents saw to it that the quality of merchandise met fixed standards. Business with local patrons would usually regulate itself, as unsatisfactory goods would certainly cause a disgruntled customer to terminate further trade. However, this aspect of trade and goodwill was not so easily handled with overseas trade though it represented a significant source of income in the lives of the early settlers as it does today. The "Viewers" inspected just about every item of trade. From the beginning there were surveyors or viewers or measurers of many commodities commonly sold. A few of the more commonplace inspectors included surveyors of boards, planks, timber, slitwork, shingles, clapboards; viewers and cullers of staves and hoops; and sealers of weights and measures. The viewer and sealer of moulds for bricks is uncommon today as are assay masters in our inland location, but from my own observations I find measurers of wood and bark that would certainly fit into the business of our ancestors. Important as well were the measurers of wood, gaugers, viewers and surveyors of casts made for tar, pit, pitch, turpentine and resin, and measurers of salt and cullers of dry fish. There was an inspector of lime imported by boat. There were viewers or inspectors of grain in every town; their special concern was cleanliness and weight. The sealer of weights and measures was vital since his office was a prime safeguard for the public during this time. Fence-viewers, and pound-keepers, hog-viewers and field-drivers helped to make up a formidable list of public servants.

The make-up and the duties of town officers have been altered in many ways over the years, and still, since the Revolution, the overall nature of town control over its citizens has been carried out within the framework that is recognized as having come from the practices, trials and failures of people working out their own destinies. The moderator still comes first in the order of business, be it a gathering together of a civic group or the official conduct of a town meeting. His office is an occasional one. His performance was and is to see that good order and decorum prevail throughout all town meetings. He is charged with the management and regulation of the business of town meetings. Through the years we note the growing practice of the moderator appointing committees. It's a practical procedure as it allows for the taking of time to learn of those interested in particular matters who will devote themselves to tasks for which they have volunteered. Quick action on the floor of a meeting has not always been the best action. And so the attention and selection of minor officers in a town is often easiest when chosen by a "commanding" officer such as the moderator. From the very early days of history, the selectmen have been the prime ruling agents of all incorporated townships. Since all towns were small in population, it was the custom to have three selectmen. At first, the three men were chosen annually, but in later years, the method of staggered elections was adopted which allowed that one selectman was elected every year, his term lasting for three years. It made for a carryover system that gave a kind of continuity to programs and plans and thus tended to keep the "Ship of State" on a more even keel. This practice is followed in many governmental groupings nowadays. Except for innovative programs or a wish on the part of a significant number of citizens to change the method of procedure, we find that the Board of Selectmen still exercise an overall control of a town. Books on the subject are rare but the sheer volume of information to be covered is massive.

It would seem neglectful to omit mention of the town inhabitants while on this subject of town affairs. It's important to draw a picture, however sketchy, of the early citizen and his relation to the township of which he was an integral part. Until 1767, the overriding factor of citizenship status was membership or at least involvement in the church. As early as 1692, it was decreed that a person could reside in a town with the approval of the town meeting for three months, at the end of which time, he would be considered a citizen of that town. Throughout this probationary period, the townspeople reserved the right to "Warn" or direct newcomers to leave the town. By 1700 one had to apply for the privilege of living in some towns. If for some reason this resource was not used, and one had resided within the town boundaries for 12 months, he might stay on under the provision of the law that the town would not be charged to support him because of "sickness, lameness or otherwise."

By 1739, town law had decreed that one could only be "harbored" in a town or "have the privilege of voting unless such person shall first make known his desire to the selectmen thereof and obtain from it an approbation, or the approbation of the town for his dwelling there," etc. In 1789, the regulations eased up slightly and if one were not warned out for two years, he was considered to be an inhabitant. Of course, after the founding of our nation, new regulations were adopted in the several states. From "Guide Posts," "Fettering Horses," and "Militia" to the "School Prudential Committees," "Small Pox," and "Taxes," there was an unending list of areas that warranted the attention of the authorities. Finally, in 1791, "on the 9th of March, an act was passed prolonging the time for constituting a settlement without 'warning' to three years." Since their forming, the states have had control over such things as long as state law does not conflict with the national requirement. It should also be pointed out in this report that in our modern operation of civic affairs, the fiscal aspects or business doings of our town have become complicated and involved. Consequently the finance board of the town has grown powerful. The town accountant is likewise important since he is charged with keeping the finances well "journal'd" with a clear picture of our fiscal state. In recent years, the assessors have become very important to all property owners. The age-old admonition that "Nothing is sure but death and taxes" still holds true since no tax collector of my knowledge has ever let up in his determination to play up his record to keep it equal to the statistics of the great creator in his tabulation on our chances of death.



“Trunk Meeting House” — corner of Wood, Fuller and Cedar Streets.
Built in 1821, it burned down on July 3, 1913.

CHURCHES

The Town of Halifax, made up from parts of Plympton, Middleboro and Pembroke, was incorporated on July 4, 1734—by the old style calendar. When the new style calendar was adopted in 1752, the date became July 15, 1734. The first transaction recorded—which indicates the separation of Plympton and what was to become Halifax—appears in the Plympton records. On February 4, 1730 David Bosworth, Ignatius Cushing and Isaac Thomson formed the committee chosen by the Town of Plympton to set the parsonage line. At a Town Meeting held at Plympton on November 1, 1731, the town voted:

“That the inhabitants to the northward of the Meadow Brook in Plympton afore said should have the liberty for a meeting amongst them the next winter season.”

By Meadow Brook is probably meant the Monponsett Meadow Brook in Halifax on which later stood the Palmer Saw Mill.

At a Town Meeting held in Plympton on November 26, 1733:

“The Petition of the inhabitants of the northerly part of the said Town was laid before the Town to know whether the said Town would vote them off a separate Township according to the Bounds therein mentioned and it passed in the negative.”

The next recorded move on the part of several residents of this designated area, which subsequently became Halifax, was to petition the General Court for a separation; their petition was granted. Prior to the organization of the church, but after the granting to establish the town by the General Court, the following transpired on July 18, 1743 at the first Town Meeting:

“Ignatius Cushing¹ was chosen the first Town Clerk. Ebenezer Fuller, Ignatius Cushing and David Bosworth were chosen the three Selectmen and Assessors; Francis Pumery, Constable; Robert Waterman, Treasurer; John Drew was chosen Tythingman but refused the office and John Briggs was elected.

Samuel Sturtevant² and Ebenezer Cobb were chosen for Highway Sur-

¹Ignatius Cushing had been the Town Clerk in Plympton for four years and five months, 1727-1731.

²Samuel Sturtevant had been one of the first Selectmen of Plympton.

veyors, Robert Waterman and Barnabas Thomson as Fence Viewers, John Bearse was elected with Timothy Wood as Hogleaves and David Bosworth as Sealer of Weights and Measures."

All of the above town officers were elected to serve until the regular Town Meeting that was held in the following March when all annual Town Meetings were held according to General Laws. The second Town Meeting on July 25, 1734 voted:

"...to provide a minister to begin August 1st for five Sabaths. Voted to have Mr. Abial Howard for the first two Sundays and Mr. John Cotton the next two and the committee of Thomas Tomson, David Bosworth and Robert Waterman had the directive to provide for the fifth Sunday or to substitute for any inability to follow this plan. The meeting appropriated 60 lbs by 'way of rate' to pay the ministers. . . ."

The original book of church records is intact and secured in a church box kept in the town vault. It is usually exhibited at the Church Fair—but only for viewing, because of its parched and brittle state. One may look upon it, but must not touch it.

The election of the first minister took place on January 28, 1734/5. Ephraim Keith received 15 votes against 8 voted to John Cotton. However, Mr. Keith turned the pastorate down. Rev. Cotton was subsequently chosen by a majority vote on April 9, 1735. He accepted and became the first Minister, serving this town for 21 years. Mr. Cotton, grandson of John Cotton of Boston, graduated from Harvard College in 1730. His starting salary was 100 lbs.

On November 3, 1735, the members of the Church chose David Bosworth, Samuel Sturtevant and Isaac Tinkham as Deacons. The first two, who had previously been Deacons in the Plympton Church in 1719, accepted on the spot; Tinkham, however, took one night to decide and then did accept. It was required that two Deacons should be seated in front facing the congregation. One of the Deacons set the tune for each line that was chanted. The range of voices was kept deliberately narrow. Deacon Waterman, serving at a later date, could never accept the change to permitting tunes with a wider range. His feelings were so disturbed that he left when singing in this manner took place and would return to the service when the decorum became more suitable to him.

April 2, 1738, John Leach was chosen to keep and sweep the Meeting House. It was voted "to give him fourteen shillings if he would sweep it 12 times within the year and lock and unlock it at seasonable times."

Two tythingmen were elected at the Town Meeting each year. Their duties were to keep order during the services and to check the attendance. Members were required to attend once in every four weeks. If they did not they were brought before a justice of the peace and a fine was assessed. If this fine went unpaid, they were sentenced to be whipped or put in the stocks. The stocks stood at the northwest corner of the church until about 1790; to our knowledge they were never used. Mrs. Hilda Thomas has the original tything pole used in our church to keep individuals attentive. They have been called "sleep vanishers." And, since long sermons of two a day were the order, there was a tendency to nod. The tythingman's eight-foot pole tickled those of the gentler sex and

those of the other half of the human family who needed prodding got a firmer bang on the knuckles. The two tythers of the flock were stationed, one in the gallery and one below.

On April 22, 1746 it was voted

“...to desire Messers John Waterman and Moses Standish and Nathan Tinkham to have inspection over children on Sabbath days noons and Barnabas Tomson and Isaac Tinkham to overlook them in Meeting Time to prevent their playing.”

Thus, at this early date, we have an official record of the organized control and direction of the children associated with the Halifax Church. It assures us that we were the first in America to organize what now is called “Sunday School.”

The first church service was held in the home of Robert Waterman on April 18, 1732 and the first Meeting House was built in 1733, one year before the town was incorporated. The land on which the Meeting House was built was granted by John Bryant on April 19, 1732 as “a piece of land to build a Meeting House.” The proprietors were Ignatius Cushing, Ebenezer Fuller, Thomas Croade, James Sturtevant and Thomas Thomson.

On October 16, 1734 the church was formed by the Ecclesiastical Council. Here we find the first entry in the record of “The Church of Christ In Halifax.”

“This day was set apart by the People of Halifax as a day of Fasting and Prayer in order for the gathering and embodying the several members of other churches that reside in this Town into a ‘Church State’ that they might enjoy the privileges and ordinances of the Gospel among them, and this was accordingly done by the assistance of the Rev. Mr. Thatcher of Middleborough, Mr. Lewis of Pembroke, Mr. Leanord of Weymouth, Mr. Stacey of Kingston, Mr. Parker and Mr. Campbell of Plympton who together with ye messengers of their Churches were-present for ye more orderly carrying on-ye said Solemn affair.”

Those who so wished to keep their association with their original churches in Middleboro and Plympton during their lifetimes were granted the privilege. On this same day when they formed a church they made their Confession of Faith which can be found in the First Church Book. The membership subscribing to the First Covenant included the 22 males and 31 females in the following list:

Samuel Sturtevant
David Bosworth
Thomas Thompson
John Drew
James Bryant
Isaac Tinkham
Robert Waterman
John Waterman
James Sturtevant
Ignatius Cushing
Ebenezar Fuller

Abija Tinkham
Lydia Cobb
Elizabeth Drew
Mary Tomson, Jr.
Martha Waterman
Lydia Waterman
Susanna Bosworth
Sarah Briggs
Thankful Bearce
Mary Sturtevant
Joanna Tillson

Ebenezar Cobb	Abia Bearce
Timothy Wood	Susanna Ransom
Thomas Croade	Abigail Thompson
John Briggs	Mary Curtis
Jonathan Bosworth	Sarah Drew
John Fuller	Harrah Fuller
James Snow	Experience Bearce
John Thomson, Jr.	Elizabeth Sturtevant
Icabod Standish	Elizabeth Thomson
Joseph Waterman	Patience Bosworth
Robert Waterman, Jr.	Mary Thomson
Elizabeth Fuller	Phoebe Standish
Ruth Bosworth	Mary King
Mary Wood	Manitable Snow
Ruth Cushing	Patience Waterman

Mary Cushman

After four years of Rev. Cotton's Pastorate, our first parsonage was built on March 26, 1739. The official action that put into motion this accomplishment:

"Voted to accord with Mr. Cotton's request for 'Article of Building' and seeking to give him 100 lbs—and it was voted that people could do their rateable part by supplying boards, shingles, laths, posts or rails at the market price provided he or they deliver the same to said Mr. Cotton or his order at or before the last day of November next and produce a receipt thereof to the Constable of the Town."

At the Town Meeting on April 13, 1739 it was voted:

"That Capt. Thomas Croade and Josiah Sturtevant should be the men to go to Jacob Tomson to search the records consarning the ministry lot of land within the Town of Hallifax and also to get a copy of the same and likewise to discorse with sum of wise men consarning that affair and make a report of the proceedings at the next Town Meeting."

At an adjourned Town Meeting December 20, 1742, it was voted:

"Capt. Thos. Croade and Robert Waterman were to choose to procure a piece of land (woodlot) for the ministry and to make a report in March."

In 1743, it was voted to raise a sum to pay for the "Lot of Land" bought for the use of the ministry. This lot was one of the original twenty acre lots division laid out and recorded in the proprietors book of records (see page 141). The town purchased this lot from George Watson of Plymouth through Robert Waterman by deed dated March 2, 1743. At an adjourned Town Meeting of March 26, 1743 it was voted:

"That the tract of land which the Town hath bought of Mr. Robert Waterman of Hallifax shall be devoted to sequestered and set apart for the use of the ministry in the said town holding or appearing to the way of the Church Discipline and Worship Commonly called Congregational and to be

improved in said town by the cutting needful firewood for said ministry in said Town and the same is now sequestered and set apart to be for the use aforesaid forever there after."

The Rev. John Cotton married Hannah Sturtevant of Halifax on December 9, 1746. After twenty-one years of service to Halifax, he returned to Plymouth because of a throat ailment and became the Registrar of Deeds and Treasurer. In 1755, the attention of the church seems to have been concerned with closing out any affairs with Mr. Cotton. Moses Standish, Noah Cushing, and Robert Waterman were directed to make "any bargain agreeable" to provide support for the Reverend during this period of adjustment. It was voted to stake Mr. Cotton at the rate of thirteen pounds six shillings per year till "ye said Mr. Cotton gits into some business. All of this if he will call the Church to-geather and sever his pastoral duties by January 1st next." At about this time (1756) it was voted:

"To give said Rev. Cotton 'sofficient' security for the payment of one hundred pounds in other species besides money to be delivered to his father's house in Plymouth at ye market price-viz etc., partly in carpentry and masonary work and also fencing stuff or in a cow and in flax, oats, corn, rie and other necessities. Said Mr. Cotton to give an authentick deed of all lands and buildings in Hallifax to his wife to sign it, etc."

This "authentick deed" was dated March 2, 1756. By vote of a regular Town Meeting on March 4, 1757 they chose and empowered Thomas Croade to execute in behalf of the inhabitants of the Town of Halifax a lawful deed to be given to Rev. Patton, who was to succeed the Rev. Cotton, "in concideration of his settling down in the work of the ministry among them." This deed dated March 1, 1758 consisted of 6½ acres on which the parsonage stood. It was a portion of the deed that Mr. Cotton had deeded back to the town.

In general, Rev. Patton's period of service which lasted ten years was tolerable but there was enough displeasure with him to cause this statement to be entered into the records: "That too much at the desk, should be among people and is wise as a serpent and as harmless as a Dove." Rev. Patton was to be succeeded by Rev. Briggs on February 23, 1767.

At a proprietors meeting held at Halifax on April 1, 1751 it was voted:

"That the meeting house in Hallifax should be finished and plastered as soon as could be with convenience provided Said proprietors could agree upon a proper method in doing the same."

There were many suggestions for the "finishing," which meant the enlarging of the Meeting House, and it was a year before they came to the following agreement and voted to grant unto Thomas Croade, Deacon Robert Waterman, Noah Cushing and Ebenezer Tomson the following liberty which they agreed to perform. This final action took place on March 6, 1752:

"To cutt said meeting house in two parts from North to South and Remove it asunder Sixteen feet, and to put in a piece of that length and adjoin and inclose it and finish said Newpart so far as Said meetin house is now finished both inside and outside and set up the pulpit In the middle

as it now Stands at their Cost and Charge and for their trouble and Cost they have so much Room in said meeting house as they add below, above and also in the front gallary that is to Say they to Remove the Seats in the body below So near the middle as they now stand and also to let every Man have a new pew as Near to the Middle as those Stand which they now own in Exchange for them."

This building where Rev. Cotton preached was unfinished for about 20 years (started 1733-plastered 1753). The plaster was made from lime brought from Wareham in the form of oyster shells. These shells were prepared by burning on the lawn in front of the church, where the present church now stands. The town voted to:

"Proceed to plaister the Meeting house the next fall and to plaister the walls of the said house. Ebenezer Fuller, James Bears, Samuel Waterman was the committee appointed to provide the material and workmen and agree with them for the plaistering said meeting house so far as they can do it without paying money."

The pulpit rose above the main floor to the extent of fourteen steps: underneath it was kept the gunpowder and shot. The pews in the main part were eight feet square and the choice pews were on either side of the pulpit. Close by there were pews designated for the deaf; also in the gallery were two pews for the Negroes and Indians.

As time passed, some pews would revert to the church, and were auctioned off in turn to meet extraordinary expenses. This practice is no longer used and all pews are free to all comers. In a long, legal document dated May 21, 1853 about the meeting house and the division of the pews, etc. reference is made to the "new stairs, the women's side, the women's stairs, the women's door, men's side and the gallery."

"Those who own pews in the Meeting House shall keep and maintain the windows against them. If this were not done selectmen would then require pay of them."

Entries regarding the pews may be found in the records such as the following:

"To sell two front seats in church in the women's gallery also struck off a front pew for the men to Barnabas Tomson for five pounds six shillings eight pence to be paid half year at a time." Voted "to sell the two hind seats both on the women and the Men's side in the body of the church and to make pews that the floor must not be raised but one inch."

In 1821, pews were sold in the Meeting House. The sale began at nine o'clock in the morning. Twenty-five percent of the cost was to be paid by January 1st with another payment again by July and the remainder by March 1st. Each customer had to have a sufficient bondsman, and a committee was to settle with the old pew holders. No bids came under fifty cents and the Minister could have his choice for his use. It was voted that anything due after January 1st would draw interest. The money was turned into the treasurer of the town.

It had been previously voted on August 3, 1752 that the front doors should

be ordered as the committee saw fit and outside work to be done around the doors at town's cost. It was voted in 1772, to "color the door and windows and boardwork on both ends and the foreside of the Church." This may be the first painting to occur on any public building in this town.

Incidents and attitudes that have connection with Church affairs through the history of our religious institutions included many interesting items. The first reference to lamps is made in 1814. On April 7, 1834 we find the first mention of stove and fuel. "Gave an order to Thomas Drew for the fuel for the Winter past. \$2.25." It was decided on Feb. 23, 1834, "Since we now have a stove in the Church that Communion be attended once in two months through the year, instead of omitting it in winter and having it every month in the summer heretofore."

From 1784-1814 the town clerk cried out all the wedding intentions just before the services. There was a new communion set acquired to go along with the newly constructed church in 1852. There is still in existence a table that came down from the period of the Old First Church.

During Rev. Cotton's Pastorate, specifically March 18, 1744, the town voted "to request the proprietors of the meeting house to give said meeting house up to the town." This came to pass some eight years later on March 21, 1752. Voted:

"...to accept the Meeting House as the town's Meeting House upon the terms of the proprietors voted this day to give it up to the town which is as followeth viz. "It was voted that the Meeting House and the land where on it stands and which belongs to the Proprietors after the additions is made to said house by Thomas Croade Esq., Deacon Robert Waterman, Mr. Noah Cushing and Mr. Ebenezer Tomson agreeable to a vote of the Proprietors at their meeting on the sixth day of March 1752 and finished as far as the other part of said house is now finished, shall be and belong to the town of Hallifax to be for the use and the benefit of said town forever and always. Reserving the present owners and possessors of the particular pews in the said house their rights and property there-in when it is done according to the aforesaid vote of the proprietors provided also that the said Town of Hallifax shall at their next meeting to be held this day in the afternoon pass a vote to accept of the said house as soon as may be after the aforesaid addition is made and finished as aforesaid and further that the Town, in case they so do, shall have the benefit of what is subscribed and yet unpaid and that aforesaid Thomas Croade, Robert Waterman, Noah Cushing, and Ebenezer Tomson are to allow in material toward plastering the meeting house!"

The following transaction dated April 25, 1854 transferred the original First Church to the town to be used as a town house, armory and library. From Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 259, Page 258:

"That Jabez Soule, Ephrin B. Thompson, Ira Sturtevant and Thomas Holmes a committee of the First Religious Society in the Town of Halifax, a corporation duly established under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in consideration of \$700 paid by Eldridge G. Morton, Samuel Churchill and Edwin Lyon Selectmen of the Town of Halifax, the

receipt whereof we do here by acknowledge do hereby give, grant sell and convey unto the said Town of Halifax a certain piece of land containing about 20 rods more or less and the building standing thereon Bounded—beginning at the corner of Henry Popes land (which is in the range of the highway) thence North 79 degrees West 2 rods seven links to the North West corner of said house; thence by the range of the west side of said house and Parish land to the highway thence by the highway to the first bound mentioned.”

This building, surrendered to the town, was no longer used as a church. A new church, the present church was erected in 1852 a little west of where the original building stood. The original church was moved to the site of the present Town Hall, and came to its end in 1907 when it burned. The present church had an addition added in 1966.

Sheds for the horses had been built in 1807 and were located “at the northward of the Meeting House.” When these were built the pound was moved down in the hollow. The sheds were taken down in 1924. Several pictures showing these horse and carriage sheds in the rear of the church are in the possession of the town historian.

Somewhere in the course of time, after the pound was moved, it was destroyed but much reference is made to this down through the years. In retrospect it seems regrettable that we had to lose such a useful structure. The pound served its purpose through scores and scores of years, where it held for reclaiming those creatures that wandered out of bound and were reclaimed by their owners. The carriage sheds were a haven for man and beast. They sheltered and harbored more individuals and their philosophy than any conceivable modern calculator could compile and supplied the easy locale for the germinating of more gossip than any other space on earth—than perhaps a woman’s kitchen. A retired minister once stated that as a young man he was advised never to accept a call to a church that had horse sheds.

The original church was topped by a steeple which was erected in 1821. To our knowledge it lasted until 1852 when the building was remodeled to become the Town Hall. The steeple on the new church, built in 1852, was able to withstand the gale of 1880 and several strikes by lightning down through the years. In 1951 the steeple was deemed unsafe and needed rebuilding, involving repair of the steeple, bell tower and supporting structure. The amount needed for this restoration inside and out amounted to \$15,000. Interest in “Save our Steeple Campaign” was widespread. Contributions came in from every state in the union and from England, Canada and Puerto Rico.

At one time there was a granite and iron fence that surrounded nearly the whole church and certainly encompassed all of the then existing cemetery at the rear of the church. There was also an ornamental fence of a very attractive design built around the Civil War Monument. Some traces of the granite and the iron fence that surrounded the Church still exist and some of it still stands across the easterly end of the cemetery. The style of this fence was copied from that used in the town of Kingston. The ornamental fence around the Civil War Monument was taken down and contributed toward the scrap metal drive to alleviate the shortage of metals during World War II.



The Congregational Church in the early 1900's, with carriage sheds in back of the church.



Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church on Monponsett Street was built in 1921 by Eliot Harlow from Middleboro.



Congregational Church on Plymouth Street. It is the second building (1852) on this site of the original Meeting House (1733).

In 1885 it was voted to tax the pew owners to raise funds for painting the church. [It may not be inappropriate to interject here that the last repainting of the church was in 1970.] The main body of the church was painted by a contractor and the new addition was done mostly by a painting bee resulting in a very attractive edifice.

Ministers — Halifax Congregational Church

John Cotton
 William Patten
 Ephraim Briggs
 Abel Richmond
 Elbridge Howe
 Emerson Paine
 William A. Peabody
 C. Ash
 E. P. Howland
 John C. Thomson
 Enoch Sanford
 Edward Kimball
 Timothy Brainerd
 William A. Fobes
 George F. Wright
 Frank L. Bristol
 George Juchan
 George Shaw
 James Wells
 George Robinson
 B. F. Fuller

C. L. C. Younkin
 A. Jones
 Louis Ellms
 Edward Sargent
 Jesse H. Jones
 Paul G. Viehe
 Dwight F. Mowery
 L. P. F. Vauthier
 Isaac Fleming
 David Williams
 Joseph Mayer
 Jesse Dees
 James T. Thomas
 Scott C. Siegle
 Warren A. Leonard
 Kenneth B. Wyatt
 Harold H. Rogers
 J. Herbert Brautigam
 Theodore G. Bickley
 Bernard W. Sayler
 Walter L. Rudy

Gordon S. Kenison

SOUVENIR



Halifax School,
HALIFAX, MASS.

1901.

Helen C. York, Teacher.

COMMITTEE,
Geo. W. Sturtevant, Geo. W. Hayward,
Otis Pratt.

PUPILS

Nellie Jorden	Elliott Sampson
Arthur Perkins	Bertie Shurtleff
Elcie Wilkins	Thomas Robson
Otis Perkins	Alton Wood
Robert Cushman	Ellen Baker
Nymphis Marston	Thomas Boardman
Arthur Sampson	Louisa Wood
Eugene Bennett	Mamie Bennett
Hattie Sampson	Gladiſ Perkins
John Robson	Albert Wood
Wilford Estes	Georgie Estes
Charlie Sampson	Elvin Wood
Willie Shurtleff	Albert Bennett
Arthur Waterman	Helen Boardman

G. F. BROWN & CO., PUBLISHERS, SEVERLY, MASS.

This Graduation Exercise Souvenir is from Schoolhouse No. 3, which was located a short distance to the east from the corner of Furnace and Elm Streets.

SCHOOLS

In 1677, it was first decreed that there should be educational training for all the children of Plymouth County residents. The school concept was not at first universally applied, nor was it free, though the colony did eventually adopt regulations making education compulsory.

“That in whatsoever township in this government consist of 50 families or upwards. Where there were families of 100 or more, Latin must be offered in Grammar School to prepare for the University. The town making a reasonable appropriation. The profits from the Cape Fisheries, hereto ordered to maintain a Grammar School, shall be distributed to such towns as to have such Grammar Schools, not exceeding 5 lbs per annum to any one town.”

It was an admirable move on the part of our ancestors that they were so prompt in establishing instruction for their children.

Prior to 1700, the general educational situation in what would soon be Halifax was comparable to that of most other settled parts of Massachusetts. However, with the termination of King Philip's War came the dawn of a new era. Weary of war and starvation, and with renewed hope for the future, the people dedicated themselves to building lasting homes and institutions. They saw clearly the need for training their youth to insure the development of a strong nation.

In the town records, the first entry concerning formal education in Halifax was made on December 4, 1732:

“The selectmen were appointed a committee to provide a schoolmaster for the “Town.” (The use of the word “Town” is merely to identify the locality in this instance. The town itself did not become incorporated until July 4, 1734.)

The year 1733 saw the erection of the Meeting House and presumably a new status for the local youths in the way of schooling. For one thing, the minister, the Rev. John Cotton, who began his services in 1734, also did some teaching. Other than the instruction that he gave, however, any “learning” that was done was done in the Dame school. “Moving Schools” or “Traveling Schools” were also popular at this time.

In 1738 at a town meeting on March 30th it was voted that “Jonathan Sears should be schoolmaster for the ensuing year.” He remained master for thirteen years. In his case he also acted as court messenger—serving summonses; choir



No. 1 Schoolhouse, corner of Plymouth and Monponsett Streets. In 1910, it was moved to become Halifax's first Fire Station. Eventually, it will be moved to Ye Olde Halifax Village.

leader; bell ringer for calling the parishioners to public worship; and gravedigger.

On May 18, 1741 it was voted that school "should be kept 4 mos. at the schoolhouse in the Easterly part of Town; the next 3 mos. some place near the house of Peter Tomson on the Southerly side of Herring River (near the cross-roads of Elm and Plymouth Sts. today); and the next two months at the proposed schoolhouse to be built on the land of Nehemiah Bosworth on the south part of his land near where two ways meet." The last three months of school were to be held in the southerly part of town "where the neighbors shall agree."

For the entire century, school was held in homes and then in town schoolhouses. In one instance, one of these schoolhouses was moved about, comparable almost to the moving of a checker on a checkerboard. Eventually, however, the school program settled into a rather defined five district system. From what we can gather from the town records, the five districts were: The Easterly school district at the corner of Plymouth and Holmes Streets; another at the junction of Routes 106 & 58 and later in the center of town across from Kings Supermarket complex which in those days was the Indian Trail; a third school by Fuller Bridge on South Street on the west side and south of Hayward Street; the westerly and fourth school was located on Elm Street slightly southeast of the corner of Furnace and Elm Streets; and a school on Thompson Street near Summit Street.

These district schools were controlled and administered exclusively by a Prudential Committee in each district. This elected group hired a teacher, arranged for board and room, paid the salaries and conducted periodic examinations of said instructors. It wasn't until many years later that the entire town was united under one educational system, a development that will be discussed later.

The several schoolhouses that the town built were always placed close to the road for convenience. There was usually an entrance porch that acted as the clothes room. Whenever feasible, the fireplace would be constructed in the north end of the building. Across the south end and facing the fireplace stood the two orderly rows of desks with the rear tier elevated. The desks consisted of three seats. There were two rows on each side of the room seating a general total of approximately twenty-four pupils. The open floor space in the center of the room was used for recitations.

On February 21, 1791, town records show an order given to Rev. Ephraim Briggs for his "keeping school" that amounted to 7 lbs. 4 shillings. A later teacher, Ruth Bosworth, was boarded by Isaac Waterman to whom the Town paid 9 shillings for the service. Also on this date, "The Selectmen order given to Samuel Sturtevant for labor and materials contributed to the building of the school house. On September 1, the Selectmen order given to Holmes Sears was 7 shillings for the use of his home to 'keep school'."

In 1793, the town voted to expend two-thirds of the 60 lbs. appropriated to hire a schoolmaster, leaving one-third of the monies to be split among the school mistresses.

In 1794: "Voted to provide a S-T-O-C-K L-O-C-K for each school; order to M. E. Thomson for boarding Capt. Leonard when keeping school over this past month."

In 1797: "Voted that children shall not carry work to school this past month " This insinuates that non-school work had no place in formal schooling.

Women teachers were generally boarded rather cheaply. The common rate for a woman's board was \$1.00 per week. Men like Oliver Snell were boarded at a reasonable expense as well. John Poole was paid \$1.00 for boarding Mr. Snell for one and one-half weeks.

An item entered in 1807 indicates the strong desire to give all the children an opportunity for schooling: "An order to William Waterman for boarding and schooling Zenaz Sturtevant's boy last year, \$3.83."

In 1808 the appropriated monies were still being split 75-25 in favor of schoolmasters. It was also voted this year that pupils must attend school in their own district.

Note this unusual entry in the town record made on September 30, 1817: "To Selectman order to Capt. Richard Bosworth for his wife keeping school in the So. District—\$6.88." Mrs. Bosworth was also known as the keeper of Captain Bos'ard's Wife's School. This chapter would not be complete without the accompanying story describing "Capt. Bos'ard's Wife's School." It was written by Frances Humphrey, granddaughter of Stafford Sturtevant, and appeared in the magazine *Wide Awake* in 1887.

In 1845 the school money was divided among the districts in proportion to the number of children between four and sixteen years of age living in each respective district. The Prudential Committees also voted to staff a committee to study the possibility of reducing the number of school districts to three. In 1845, the school term lasted eight weeks in Winter with the attendance required every other Saturday. An agent for the Prudential Committee would hire the teachers for whom the committee would find a boarding place and furnish wood for heating the school. Also noted in the town records of this year were the frequent spelling bees held in each district school.

In 1846, it was voted that each school district should elect its own Prudential Committee, reverting back to equal school allotments as well.

Any school teacher is sure to get a chuckle out of this entry in the Town Record of 1847: "The Town voted to have the Selectmen hold up the teachers' pay until someone could assure them that all registers were completed." To think that the Town should have to solve this problem!

In 1850, Benjamin W. Harris, later to become a distinguished member of the legal profession, taught school in Halifax, Kingston, Hanover and East Bridgewater to earn money while preparing for his law career. In 1850, he joined in partnership with the Honorable Welcome Young. Their offices were located in the store that stood directly opposite the Town Hall (Halifax).

It was suggested in this year that a new school be built between Eldridge Fuller's property and the Halifax Depot. (With the new station, there were those anticipating an upsurge in the population of that area.) Also, at this time there was the nagging question of "how the school house was set afire" to be solved.

There were some who naturally preferred to rebuild the schoolhouse located on the corner of Plymouth and Monponsett Streets on Stafford Sturtevant's property. At a meeting in 1850 a committee was chosen to take measures to "find the rogues who set the old school house on fire and destroyed it."

The schoolhouse problem was eventually solved with the construction of two



Schoolhouse No. 3, built in 1795 on Thompson Street near Summit Street. It is now a private home. It had been one of five schools in the town's five school districts.

new schoolhouses. This was decided on October 7, the same meeting at which the assembly voted "not to raise a committee to look up the rogues." One has to wonder if this should be interpreted as a decision not to blame anyone for the fire or could it be that embarrassment would have resulted from further inquiry? In any case, it was voted to raise \$600 for the new schools; the "Committee" was also instructed to procure other quarters for "keeping school" in case the new buildings were not ready—for perhaps many possible reasons even to the eventuality of another fire.

On May 6th, 1851, we find that a school had been built near the Railroad Station. In June of the same year, Stafford Sturtevant moved a schoolhouse onto the corner of his property near his home. (On August 2, 1852, he was investigated by a committee to determine his intentions.) At the same time it was voted to sell the school near the Railroad Depot for payment of debts. It was sold at auction.

In 1854 the assembly voted for the school committee not to disturb the school district. School reports say "The Prudential Committee stands in the way. . . ." That sometimes. . . "The Prudential Committees are not good but cannot help it for all have to take turns." At times the records show teachers being hired as late as the night before or the Saturday prior to the first Monday of school. It wasn't unusual for the times that some families had more influence than others. Pupils out of town "voted to allow Lewis Briggs and Martin Lucas to draw from this town a sum not exceeding their portion of the school money to be expended for schooling in another town." This was for the convenience of children who lived near town lines and made for easier travel—a "swap" situation.

It was also voted to choose a school committee of five, one from each district, to maintain the district system; also the idea of a superintendent of schools was introduced, "whose duty it shall be to examine all candidates for teaching, etc." The assembly voted to choose this superintendent by ballot. Leander Waterman became the first superintendent. It was also voted "not to disturb the school's districting practice." The school report which was read and accepted by the assemblage pointed out that the terribly poor attendance at school that year had been the result of storms, measles and whooping cough. At this point in the school committee's report we came across a reference to a law passed in 1838 that required all school committees to make a report to town meetings in writing. In this particular report, the stand was taken that "what is everybody's business is nobody's business." The town had begun to set out on a new course, not so of the Prudential Committee's, with its very local limited attitudes and insights.

In 1856 it was decided that the town would fare better with a continuing school committee—not all elected at once.

In 1857, the town decided to pay the school committee members "\$1.00 a day only." The first printed annual Town Report was produced in this same year as well, and a goodly portion of it concerned the doings of the School Committees. They wrote that great strides had been made in the last twenty years with one interesting sidenote about phonetics being used in connection with teaching the alphabet. Reading, Grammar (in which they were beginning to analyze sentences), Arithmetic, Geography and Physiology were standard subjects.

In 1858, the Town Assembly voted not to build a new Central School or

Grammar School. They also voted to split school appropriations a new way, with two-thirds of the money going for winter costs and one-third for summer expenses. Also noted was the average teacher's pay for 1857—\$22.50 with the town paying board up to \$15.00.

In 1860, the summer term lasted two months, seven days. The winter term went for two months, four days. Wages for teaching the summer term were \$16.00; for the winter term, the town paid \$36.00.

In 1868, Ira Sturtevant was voted to the School Committee for the third year in a row, probably the first time a member had lasted for more than one year. There had been a plea for this sort of thing to give continuity to the school program, as it were. At this time a new fiscal policy was adopted and one-half the school funds were voted to pay wages for the winter term, and one-half for the summer term. Before the split, \$15.00 was subtracted from the total monies to take care of the wood needs in winter.

From 1870 to 1875 there were few changes in the school system. The school districts now numbered five and by 1874 we find references to children dropping out or being taken out by parents who felt they had learned enough and should go to work. Work at this time meant the factories, and not the farms. There are also references to a few parents who did want more education for their children, but found they didn't have the money. For Halifax students, the nearest high schools at this time were in Bridgewater, Kingston and Middleboro.

In 1876, an act was passed that decreed any town in the commonwealth could raise by taxation or other means the appropriate monies to be used by the School Committee in providing conveyance of pupils to and from school. The distance at which a pupil became eligible for transportation was at least one and one-half miles.

In the next five years, there was a considerable amount of moving the schoolhouses, with five schools eventually consolidated into two. The Town Hall served as both a primary and a grammar school. It is noted in the records that the Town Hall was to be arranged and set up as a school, with stoves from schoolhouses No. 3, No. 4, & No. 5 and seats from school No. 1.

In 1876 the town appropriated \$508.95 to pay five men for supplying transportation to and from school.

In 1878, a law was enacted in Massachusetts requiring drawing to be taught. Maps, which were the essential apparatus for teaching geometric forms, were recommended. Again, by 1878, we were back to four schoolhouses. The fifth schoolhouse had since been purchased by John F. Thompson. The teachers of this year were also all women:

Miss A. Baker of Halifax

Miss Nellie M. Pope of Halifax

Miss Lucretia Osbourne of Campello

Miss Emma Darling of Middleboro

In 1883 an article appears in the Town Warrant ordering that the school that burned be replaced. A new school was built at a cost of \$634.52, but because of the fire the January session still had to be held at John Sturtevant's house.

In 1892, an article appeared in the Town Warrant speculating on whether the

town would agree to establish a graded school. Eventually, classes were held in the Town Hall where Eugene J. Deane was named teacher and designated principal as well. His aims and objectives are set forth in the Town Report of 1892.

In 1893, the Town Assembly voted to request the School Committee to act immediately to consider a school union with a common superintendent.

In 1904, the Assembly voted for a Central School. The building committee included Elliot Harlow, Eben Wood and Jabe Thompson. They were directed to report within twenty days on the plans, and at the very next meeting their building plans were approved. The vote went Yes, 38—No, 23.

It was also voted to confer with J. L. Jones and negotiate for a site in "Packard's Pasture" where the school would be located. If unable to obtain this land, they planned to take land on the west side of the church. In this same year the Assembly voted to sell at public auction the four district schools and use the money to buy furnishings for the new school.

In 1905, J. L. Jones was approached to make good his promise of land for the Central School. Elliot Harlow of Middleboro, who was to be builder of the school, asked the Town Meeting in March of 1906 to accept the lot of land opposite Lysander Haywoods' Property (where the school now stands) from Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Jones. The Town accepted the offer and erected an iron fence around the property chosen as the school site.

The 1914 Town records show that \$2,000.00 was spent for High School transportation. Also an excerpt from the program of the 1914 graduation class follows:

Clyde Otis Bosworth
Anne L. Bricknell
Annette L. Franklin

Clayton A. Bricknell
Herman Dewhurst

In 1921 school transportation became motorized. In the following year arrangements were made to provide transportation from Halifax to Bridgewater High School for all Halifax pupils desiring to further their schooling. The cost was subsidized partly by the Town and partly by the parents; the total cost of transportation for five school students in 1922 was \$1,586.31. That same year there were twenty-four pupils from Halifax attending High Schools.

In 1926, modern plumbing was installed because the superintendent recommended flush closets and septic tanks as essential. On his recommendation, the school department made a study and installed the facilities. The people of Halifax were congratulated by state officials for providing adequate school facilities. Few other towns of comparable size had done as much.

In 1929, the School Committee voted to build an addition to the Central School. They commissioned Ebenezer Holmes, C. Devitt, G. H. Armstrong and Guy Baker for the work and decided on a sum of \$16,000 to be spent, \$5,000 of which had to be raised that year. Also at this time, the first significant change in heating and ventilation was undertaken at the school. For \$2,000, a unit system of heating was installed. In each room fans drew in fresh air from out of doors. This air then passed through a copper radiator which heated the air as it entered the classrooms.

On March 28, 1930, it was voted to rescind the building addition, 112 to 57.



Standish Manor, the residence of J. L. Jones, was built in 1733. In 1911 it was converted to a girl's school. Today it is the site of Halifax's new elementary school.

In 1933, it was voted to ask the School Committee to study school needs including the proposed addition of nine rooms.

In 1938, through the dedicated efforts of our school Custodian, Myron Wood, a hot water system was added to the water supply so that a most important practice of better personal cleanliness, health and a cleaner building would result.

At a special Town Meeting in 1947, it was decided after much deliberation to forego the building of a new school and, instead, add a two-room addition to the present school. It was ready for use in September of the following year.

In 1951, a Regional School Planning Committee was appointed which sat regularly throughout the year. Because of the increased difficulty of providing adequate school facilities for the expanding population, a new elementary or regional plan was adopted. Later, Halifax entered into a Regional School System on a secondary level as well.

By 1954, the Regional High School movement had crystallized to form a "Silver Lake Regional High School."

By 1960, the new Elementary School was built. In 1965, the addition of six rooms was made.

In the summer of 1975, the construction on the Early Childhood Center was completed for the opening of the school in the fall.



Central School, 1905, on Plymouth Street.



Central School, 1976, with two rooms added in 1948.

May 1887
In *Wide Awake*

By Frances A. Humphrey —a granddaughter
of Stafford S. Sturtevant

CAP'N BOS'ARD'S WIFE'S SCHOOL

The true spelling of the name is "Bosworth," and in these days it is pronounced as spelled. But in the time of which I write—the last part of the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth centuries—it was pronounced "Bos'ard" which may have been, after all, the original pronunciation of an original genuine English name.

Why the school was, and is, always spoken of as "Cap'n Bos'ard's Wife's School" it is impossible to say. Certainly it was not because that Mrs. Bos'ard lacked individuality, or that Cap'n Bos'ard, in his function as head of the house, overtopped his wife as a high hill does a low one. So far as I have learned each was a person of strong character and marked individuality. Cap'n Bos'ard was well on in years at the time of the Revolutionary War, and was the owner of a lumber mill, and it is related that certain English soldiers had deserted from that portion of the army stationed in Marshfield and had been tracked to Halifax, and that the pursuers entered the mill where Cap'n B. was at work and demanded if he knew anything of the deserters.

"Don't know anything about your deserters," was the remark as he went on



New Elementary School on Plymouth Street. This site was originally the parsonage occupied by John Cotton, the first minister of Halifax.

with his work. The soldiers were not accustomed to such cavalier treatment, at least only from Yankees, and they angrily drew their pistols and pointed them threateningly at the Cap'n as they proclaimed their authority and demanded deference.

"Blaze away, blaze away, if you want to," was the sole response. But they did not blaze away.

Cap'n B. was a carpenter and master builder and it is said, superintended the erection of more than one building in Boston. His trade, however, does not seem to have been a lucrative one, for they were always poor, which was probably why Mrs. Bos'ard continued her school for so many years, teaching even when she was a very old woman. Her charges were six pence (eight and one-third cents) per week, which could not have filled her coffers to overflowing at any time.

The old home, wherein the school was kept, has long since disappeared. Nothing remains except a single foundation-stone, and the old well. But it was a new house in the early days of the school, built by Cap'n Bos'ard himself.

Near it, separated only by a few feet, stood the still older house, built we must suppose, in the early part of the eighteenth century when Halifax was still part of Plymouth. Both it is likely, had a picturesque old gambrel roof. This oldest house served in the days of Cap'n Bos'ard's wife's school as a carpenter's shop and barn. And a most enchanting barn it must have been to the children with its many rooms and raftered chambers where the spiders spun unmolested, and the swallows flew in and out of the broken windows, while the few sheep nestled in the ample fireplaces and the hens roamed to and fro and laid their eggs in the long-disused cupboards.

The hens, however, did not confine themselves to the barn. In the upper story of the new house, in a long unfinished garret, the meal chest was kept and thither the hens resorted in the summer time, when the door swung hospitably open from morning til night. They hung about the stairway, slipping up on the sly and helping themselves to meal. It twas part of "industrial education" of the pupils to frighten off the hens, one at a time being detailed to sit on the stairs for that purpose. You remember that Mr. Squeers taught his pupils after this plan: "W-i-n win, der d-e-r, winder, now go and wash the winders."

One pupil recalls how a certain small speckled hen used to lay an egg daily in a niche of this stairway, flying out a triumphant "Cut-cut-cuy-da-cut!" A pleasing episode in the otherwise dry business of study.

Watching the hens, searching for their hidden nests, was only part of the "industrial training" of this school. Mrs. Bos'ard also kept geese, and a detachment was sent out daily to watch these geese as they fed by the roadside, to keep them out of the meadows where they would have made havoc of the grass. Occasionally one would stray into the forbidden ground. Mrs. B. was then notified by the watcher, and she had but to go to her door and call in a loud shrill voice, "Goose! goose! goose!" and the delinquent would walk out as obediently as the most docile pupil of them all.

These geese were kept for their feathers, and were plucked yearly. What! alive? Yes, alive. Else where did the "live goose feathers" come from which went into making the luxurious downy beds of our great-grandmothers? It is said that after the first picking it did not hurt much.

As Mrs. Bos'ard carried on her household labors during the school hours, so did she pick her geese, and anyone, looking at certain times, might have seen her seated with a goose in her lap, its head thrust into a stocking-foot, so it could not bite, a row of boys and girls before her, with toes on a line with a crack in the floor, spelling by turn, and the air around them thick with bits of soft white floating down. As geese live to a great age, it is not unreasonable to suppose that two or even three generations of children may have "assisted" in the French sense at her picking of the same goose.

Besides the regular daily duties, there were occasional ones, such as unloading and cutting up a cartload of pine wood, or catching the hens when the hen man made his annual call in the fall. This last is recalled by gray-haired men as an especially jolly lark. We can imagine it—the squawking frightened hens, the eager breathless boys and girls, and the tall dark woman with a pipe in her mouth, overseeing and directing.

A pipe! Yes. I am obliged to admit that the dame who kept this school smoked. Whether the herb she smoked was St. John's wort, which to-day, in the month of July, changes the barrel pastures that encircle the spot where her house once stood, into a field of the "cloth-of-gold," I cannot say. Doubtless, she was as wise in the use of simples as were most of the women of her day.

As I have touched upon her personal appearance, the description may as well be completed here. She was tall, dark and of meagre figure. Her teeth were early lost and consequently her mouth fell in, and her mouth and chin, both of unusual prominence, nearly met. She wore the petticoat and short gown of the day, of homemade red-and-blue, or blue-and-gray linsey-woolsey in winter, and tow and linen homespun in the summer. A kerchief was hung about her neck, and she wore a cap, of course. All women wore a cap whether their hair was scarce or abundant, putting it on as early as thirty years of age, sometimes earlier.

Jane Austin, the famous author who was living at that time in England, is depicted in her portrait in a cap encircling her pleasant girlish face. The cap usually came close around the face and was tied under the chin. In summer, the women often found it sufficient covering for the head on Sunday and often eschewed the bonnet. Mrs. Bos'ard was not over particular; her wearing apparel was oftener than not out of place. And one Sunday morning she could not find her go-to-meeting cap. All search was in vain. But later on in the week it was found in the settle-box in the kitchen. This settle was the receptacle of the culinary pots and kettles, one corner being reserved for unlaundered clothes.

A pupil called Ann has told me of the dress of the children. I went to see her when I was about to write this account. A little woman far beyond the three score-years and ten, and so short, so slight, and with a bloom on her soft, wrinkled cheeks that I could think only of the dear little fairy godmother as I sat and talked with her.

Yes, she said she went to "Cap'n Bos'ard's Wife's School" when she was only three years old. Her father took her in his arms. She was homesick at once when he left her and began to cry. "But you mustn't cry," remonstrated Mrs. Bos'ard.

"She isn't going to cry," said Cap'n Bos'ard, "for I am going to take her out with me." And he carried her out to his carpenter shop and sat her down among the curly shavings, fragrant pine-shavings, with which she played to her heart's

content. And there she stayed a greater part of every day, going out after her reading lesson, the small mite! The rough old Cap'n must have been at heart as sweet as a chestnut-burr.

He shaved shingles in his shop. The logs were cut the right length, then split by hand and shaved down with a drawing knife. And a slow process of shingle-making it seems to our age of steam.

Like the Dame, the girls wore linsey-woolsey, or homemade pressed-flannel in winter, their frocks coming down to their feet which were clad in thick woolen stockings, the yarn made from the family sheep, spun on the family wheel and knit by dear motherly or grandmotherly hands. Their shoes were thick and coarse. Some of them had a pair of pretty morocco shoes for Sunday.

They wore upon their heads homemade blankets pinned comfortably under their chins. These blankets were usually striped, though occasionally a child had one of white bound with some bright color. Ann's was blue and white, while her sister's had a little red in it—red, white and blue like our flag. And a teasing boy seeing her coming one day called out: "Here comes the military gal!" and so vexed was Lucy—for that was her name—that she could never forgive him, said Ann.

Both boys and girls went barefooted in the summer, and the boys, like the girls, were dressed in homespun from head to foot. The boys wore knitted caps in the winter, and the girls, in summer, had sunbonnets made of one piece of pasteboard and covered with homespun.

And just here must be told the story, heard often in my girlhood from the lips of the beloved physician of Halifax, who together with most of the pupils who went to that school, has long since passed over to the majority.

A sudden summer storm came up one afternoon and when it was time for the children to go home, Mrs. Bos'ard thought that little Cyrus—then six years old—was insufficiently clad and insisted on his putting on the cast-off garment of one of her grown up sons. But Cyrus demurred. He was a nice little fellow in his habits and ways, and, like the little Maid of Sker, was "degusted" at the sight of dirt. He did not like the looks of the garment, and would much rather have been wet through by the drenching rain than to put it on. But there was no alternative. Mrs. Bos'ard spoke but to be obeyed. However, as soon as he was comfortably out of sight of the house, over the low hill which lies to the north, he took off the obnoxious garment, and rolling it into a bundle tucked it under a fence intending to take it back the next morning. But alas! he forgot it. Inquiry was made and Cyrus was compelled to acknowledge the truth. It was never any use to lie to Mrs. Bos'ard. She always found the transgressor out. And then she gave him a lecture on the "Sin of Pride," and its consequences.

I do not learn that she punished much except with her tongue, and with that she was merciless. "I think," says an old pupil, "I have never in all my life heard anything equal to her invective." She did, on rare occasions, use the stick which she kept near at hand—a birch stick some seven feet long. At one time there were twins in school, a boy and a girl of five, and one of the boys amused himself one day during the absence of Mrs. Bos'ard from the room in tickling their bare feet with a twig. Mrs. Bos'ard, catching him at it, repaid him in kind with a sound flogging.

In the case of the little Priscilla Waterman, who later in life became a brilliant

leader of society in Boston, she took a far more effectual method of punishment. The little Prissey was detected in a lie, one of those lapses from the truth that childhood occasionally falls into, especially when terrorized. After a discourse on the "sin of lying," and the utterly lost and reprobate condition of the child that indulges in it, Mrs. Bos'ard brewed a cup of bitter wormwood and administered it to the little sinner. Surely never did transgression meet with a more prompt retribution in the flesh.

Tradition preserves another instance of her use of this herb as a corrective. Charles W.--- for two successive days had been permitted to go home before school was done on the plea of illness, but when on the third day he again asked permission, Mrs. Bos'ard refused to grant it. She herself took the case in hand. She gave him a dose of wormwood and put him to bed—a heroic treatment and successful, for Charles was never again seized with illness during school hours.

One of the front rooms was used as the schoolroom—the one with two windows in front. The room on the other side of the front door had but one window. The schoolroom was guiltless of plaster, the lack being supplied with newspapers that were pasted over the walls. The *Yankee*, a paper published by Wright and Ballard, was used most largely. There was a great fireplace with a crane, pot-hooks and trammels. Here the cooking was done during the winter, the atmosphere of the kitchen, from the beams which hung hams, flitches of bacon and sausages, being altogether too cold for comfortable warming. The floor was bare and there was a bed in one corner. The children sat on benches, sometimes on boards across two chairs. The seats had no backs, and the children were required to sit perfectly upright. Did one fall into a lounging attitude, he immediately received an ungentle reminder from the omnipresent birch stick. Joanna Morton, who was remarkably erect in her old age, used to say that she was indebted to the training she received at Cap'n Bos'ard's Wife's School for that uprightness of figure.

In summer the children assisted in outdoor work, and in winter they were called upon to lend a hand in the house. The cooking was not of a complicated nature, nor was the variety great. Little Ann, previously mentioned, recalls how often she was obliged to wash out salt fish tongues, preparatory to boiling. She had a vivid recollection of it because the brine was so harsh to her little hands, so roughened by the cold weather. The girls peeled potatoes and helped make the brownbread. They sewed carpet rags into long strips, which were then wound into round balls by the boys. They were taught to sew, to knit and to spin. And one is still living, past eighty, who learned to weave in the school. The great loom stood in the kitchen.

The boys fetched in the wood and the water. The fetching of the wood was . . . no sinecure. It took cords and cords of oak and birch to feed the fire in the huge fireplace. And appropos to the carrying of water follows another anecdote of the little Cyrus. The well has a curb and a windlass, not a picturesque sweep and pole. Like everything else on the place, this windlass was out of repair. It is proverbial that a shoemaker's family are ill-supplied with shoes, and a carpenter's are insufficiently housed. And doubtless Cap'n Bos'ard was so busy patching up other people's wells he had no time to devote to his own. At any rate, one day, as Cyrus was drawing up the bucket filled with water, the lifting apparatus gave out and down went the bucket to the bottom of

the well. He was in great misery over the accident and his misery was not lessened when he came to confess his ill-doing—for such he was made to regard it to Mrs. Bos'ard. She told him her son Augustus would be obliged to go down the well for the bucket; that in all probability he would be drowned, and in that event he (Cyrus) would be hung. Imagine the little fellow going tremblingly home under the weight of that fearful prophecy! With the singular reticence of childhood concerning its sorrows (personal) he told no one. But he lay awake far into the night thinking about it. And the sleep which finally came to him was troubled. Imagine if you can, his overwhelming relief and joy when, as he entered the yard next morning, he saw Augustus with the bucket beside him, both safe and sound! The good Doctor used to often relate this anecdote as an illustration of the fear under which children were then trained.

But the lessons! the lessons! Was there no studying done in this school? Indeed there was, for "She seems to have had a wonderful faculty for imparting knowledge for them times," says one of her pupils. And that was one reason probably, why her school was so popular, and that her pupils came to her from far and near. However stupid the boy or girl, or averse from the alphabet, Mrs. Bos'ard "would always get it into them." The studies were limited. There was no elaborate curriculum. Reading and writing comprised it all,—and the Assembly's Catechism. The books in use were *The Beauties of the Bible*, a small leather volume, *The Psalter* and *Spelling Book*. They read from the *Beauties of the Bible*, committed hymns from the *Psalter*, and spelled from the *Spelling Book*.

The catechism was taught orally, each pupil repeating in turn after Mrs. Bos'ard. They were catechized each day if there was time. Saturday was always devoted to that work. The children always stood during the time of catechizing, even the smallest. It was weary work standing hour after hour, repeating over and over the long complicated sentences whose meaning was as far beyond the grasp of their young minds as the East is from the West. I remember being told that one boy named Abel once fainted and fell to the floor from sheer fatigue. Since I remember him as a stout vigorous man, the fact of his fainting always lent a gruesome air to the catechizing, in my young mind. Writing was not taught as a regular thing. But if any boy desired to write, he could do so. In that case, as Mrs. Bos'ard could neither make nor mend pens, they were to be taken over to Squire "Siah" who lived in a house nearby which is now standing.

Mrs. Bos'ard trained her pupils in the correct pronunciation of words. Ground was not to be pronounced graound, nor about, abaout; a statement that may seem surprising when it is remembered that many writers of New England dialects insist that "ou" is invariably pronounced "aou" in rural districts.

A studious application to the spelling book was required. Whether the child watched the geese or the hens, it was done *Spelling Book* in hand. They were often permitted to go down to the grassy glades and piney coverts of the woods in the rear of the house to study. They played, somewhat doubtless, when away from the eye of the Dame. It would hardly have been in the child's nature not to. But the lesson had to be learned.

The school was sometimes called, ironically, "The Halifax Academy" by the neighboring townfolk. And these same impertinent outsiders had the audacity to affirm that, in default of a bell, when the hour for school arrived, Cap'n

Bos'ard went out and sneezed. I have been told that this sneeze was something tremendous—what Dominic Sampson would have pronounced “prodig-i-ous.”

Cap'n Bos'ard's Wife's School was a “vacation school,” but it ran through as many months of the year as the public school. The terms, both summer and winter, of these schools were brief. Not much money was raised for them. In the Public Records of Halifax such entries as this may be found:

“At a Town Meeting held in 1776,

“Voted, to raise £130 for the support of the minister, schools, and other town charges for the year ensuing.”

Church and state were one then. First the meetinghouse, then the school-house, then their material wants—that was the order handed down by the Pilgrim Fathers. The sum, six hundred and fifty dollars, was a small one as we estimate values. But it was a goodly sum for the town of Halifax then. And in another entry in 1787: “Voted—to raise 140 lawful silver for schools the ensuing year,” we see about the proportion taken for that purpose.

These schools were taught at first by one master who went from district to district. Taught in schoolhouses or in some friendly kitchen when the school-house was wanting. There were other private schools of lesser fame. I am told of one woman who taught a private school and boarded round, that is, with the parents of her pupils alternately. She paid for her board by spinning for the family.

Mrs. Bos'ard's jurisdiction extended beyond her schoolroom. She taught “manners,” and boys and girls were required to bow and curtsy not only upon entering the schoolroom, but to any adult whom they might chance to meet on the highway. Above all must they “make their manners to the minister of the parish.”

Everybody in Halifax went to “meeting” then. The bare old meetinghouse was filled to its exact capacity every Sunday. Did any boy linger outside when he should have decorously been seated in his father's square pew, he received an admonitory punch from Mrs. Bos'ard's umbrella, which she always carried with her. And did he whisper or smile or otherwise misconduct himself during service—and a service from three to four hours long was a fearful test to which to put a boy's endurance—her long forefinger was raised and shaken threateningly at him.

It is said that one supremely naughty youngster once refused to regard the raised finger. She rapped her snuff box so hard and so persistently at him that—the box being upside down, of which fact she was unaware—she rapped the cover off and the snuff emptied itself into the lap of her go-to-meeting gown, to the exquisite delight of the young rascal. SNUFF!! Certainly. A large majority of people took snuff in those days. Ladies and gentlemen took snuff. I never heard that George Washington did or did not. Presumably, he did. And a good snuff box, inlaid with diamonds, and with a portrait a-top, was not an infrequent gift of royalty to anyone whom it wished to honor.

In 1800 the first public library was established in Halifax. It was kept at Mrs. Bos'ard's, that being regarded as the literary center, we may suppose. I suspect she was a well educated woman for her day. She did not know “a many” languages as is said of most women called learned in the past. But she took up the systematic study of her own language, English, in order to teach it to her

boys. And one of her sons returning to Halifax when his hair was white with age, a good, and, as the word goes, a successful man, was heard to say, "What ever success I may have attained I owe to my mother."

Many curious and droll traditions linger concerning that old schoolroom, like the lavender in old linen. It was frequently used for neighborhood prayer meetings, when large pine knots were heaped up in the great fireplace to light the room, and save the expense of candles. One "dip" in the iron candlestick on the round light stand by the minister's chair, might be permitted for appearances sake, but it was not needed. The dancing flames lit up every cranny of the dingy room, playing with beautiful effects of light and shade over tapestried walls and vaulted ceilings. Cap'n Bos'ard had the bad habit of falling asleep during the meeting time, and on one evening in the midst of a fervent exhortation from one of the brethren, he was suddenly awakened by the falling of pine knots. The forestick had given way and they were precipitated, scintillating, sputtering, smoking, out on the broad hearth and even into the room itself.

"Hurrah, boys!" shouted the Cap'n only half awake, and to the undisguised amusement of the young folks in the kitchen. That was where they congregated—a separate, and I fear, not always a reverent company. On one occasion, one of their number, a young man, reached up and slyly cut bits from the flitches of bacon, which he threw upon the fire. Thus fed, its glory surpassed that of the pine knots in the schoolroom.

When I entered upon the preparation of this paper I wrote to a dear old friend of my mother for her recollections of Mrs. Bos'ard's school—if she had any. The following is part of the letter I received in reply:

"As respects Mrs. Bos'ard's school I know nothing, as I and your mother were too far away from the seat of learning to attend it.

"Should you wish to know of 'Aunt Ruth's School' I might give some information. Her school consisted of six scholars, of whom your mother, her brother J.---, Lydie S.--- of Plympton, Damaris H.--- of Halifax and myself are all I remember. The teaching consisted of reading, spelling, knitting and needlework, with lessons on good behavior. Our lessons were set up, our work examined, and then our instructress retired to the next room, leaving an open door between, and there followed her other vocation—weaving diaper. And I must add that her work was all well done and her school happy. Perfect lessons and perfect work were required and I must confess that the work was sometimes taken out and done over to the disgust of the scholar.

"It was an incentive to industry that we were allowed after lessons to stand by her loom and see, to our amazement, the four treadles used by two feet and the shuttle make such wonderful figures. To my sorrow I was told that she was allowed to die a pauper after a life of useful labor."

This account of dame-school may fit closely with an anecdote which though not directly concerned with Cap'n Bos'ard's Wife's School is an instance of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties and is concerning one of her sons. It was told to me by a son of the little Martha Briggs who is the heroine of the tale. The little Martha came of a scholarly family. Her father was one of the earlier ministers of Halifax where his pastorate was life-long, and five of her brothers were ministers also. In accordance therefore with the family tradition she was ambitious of learning, and above all did she desire to stand at the head of her

class in spelling. But good speller that she was, Marcus Bosworth was still better, and he kept his place as "number one" while Martha remained "number two." He never missed and Martha was in quiet despair when she one day made the discovery that his shoes were wearing out. It was far on towards spring and Martha knew if the shoes did give out Marcus would not have another pair until autumn. And how was he going to come to school through the February snows without shoes? She watched him day after day,—her sweet child-sympathy quite destroyed by her ambition—and marked the gradual and entire separation of the worn out soles from the uppers, and how they were tenderly tied together with bits of string in the vain endeavor to make them last a little longer. One day she was sure that their time had come. They seemed the merest skeletons of shoes, in which Marcus shuffled to the head of the class with the greatest of difficulty. Happy Martha! In imagination she saw herself standing as the proud leader of her class at the head of the long line of spellers that ranged from one end of the schoolhouse to the other. But what was her dismay when the next morning Marcus entered the schoolroom with his feet bound in pieces of cloth! To such indomitable resolution, her ambition was forced to give way, and she thereafter remained content to be "number two."

It can be further told how one day as Marcus was warming his chilled feet by the fire, the bits of cloth ignited and the master conveyed him promptly out of doors and dipped him in a snowbank to extinguish the flames: but this it seems did not extinguish his love for learning.

(END)

This story was written by Frances A. Humphrey. She was a granddaughter of Stafford Sturtevant of Halifax. She was also the authoress of *The Children of Parks Tavern*. A copy of the novel is in the Holmes Public Library. It is the only book that I have ever seen that uses Halifax for its locale. The story of "Cap'n Bos'ard's Wife's School" is of a private school that existed in Halifax during the period of 1750-1800. Mrs. Nellie I. Taft (Sturtevant) sent me the copy of the old magazine that had this story printed in it. (*Wide Awake*) May 1887 Vol. 24, No. 6.

July 15, 1961
Guy S. Baker
(Town Historian)

LIBRARIES

The first known library services in Halifax were offered in 1800 by Mrs. Richard Bosworth in connection with the Cap'n Bos'ard's Wife's School. Library services were also offered in connection with the Sunday School programs.

In 1876, Dr. Howland Holmes of Lexington, Massachusetts donated the sum of \$100.00 to establish a free library in the Town of Halifax. Dr. Holmes was the oldest brother of a resident of Halifax, John Holmes, who is well remembered for his work as a tin peddler. The old Town Hall, which had been the original meeting house, housed the library in a room once used as a drill hall. The building was destroyed by fire in 1907 and the library contents were a total loss. There had been thirty-five books out in circulation when this fire occurred and naturally they were recovered as a nucleus with which to begin again. Following the loss of the library site, the library services were moved to the Congregational Church. In 1908 the Town appropriated one thousand dollars for the new library, the committee appointed to carry out this project consisted of Henry M. Bosworth, E. Laurence Grover, Fred Simpson, Jabez P. Thompson and Edwin H. Vaughan. A school building, gift of the J. L. Jones Family, was moved to the present library site and remodeled so that it served both as a library and a Post Office. In 1910 the deed for the lot was accepted from Mrs. Elizabeth Jones. Once again Halifax had its library. It is to be noted that the Post Office no longer shares the library building but is located a short distance west on Plymouth Street. This frees the library building to some extent; however, it is becoming evident as we go along that the present facility is fast becoming inadequate for the Town's needs.

Since this writing, the new Post Office has been built and dedicated—1976. It has become an admirable addition to the public domain and certainly will assure the people of this community adequate postal services for many years. The tireless efforts of our Postmaster, John Landry, to bring this attractive and highly functional building to a reality will be appreciated by Haligonians for a long time.

The library has had some beneficent receipts, notable in 1946 a two-thousand dollar bequest from Mrs. Sarah Eddy Holmes, daughter of Dr. Howland Holmes, for the library fund. In 1934 an appropriation was made of three hundred dollars to remodel the library to permit the use of a part of the building for a schoolroom. In 1961, funds were voted for an addition to the library.

At its founding, control of the library had been placed in the hands of the selectmen, school committee, resident ministers, priests and physicians. At the 1957 Town Meeting it was voted that a board of five trustees be elected at the

annual Town elections of March 1958, and thereafter one to be elected annually for a term of five years. The first librarian was Mr. Thomas D. Morton who served for six years. His annual salary was twenty dollars. Following Mr. Morton as librarian was the Rev. James T. Thomas whose term of service covered forty-eight years. The following have served the Town of Halifax as librarians which will bring us up to the present time.

Mrs. Hilda Thomas	1931-1948
Mrs. Anne Forsstrom	1948-1952
Mrs. Hazel Atwood	1952-1955
Mrs. Edith Hoyt	1955-1962
Mrs. Inez Gassett, present librarian	1962-

In 1965 Mrs. Gassett gained the status of a full-time librarian. The staff included an assistant to the librarian, Mrs. Hilda Thomas, who is a daughter of the first librarian, one clerk and one student aide. Trustees' duties are sometimes demanding in unusual ways. For example on October 19, 1914, the trustees met in the library and voted to notify W. H. Willett to keep his hens off public property—especially off the library grounds.

There have been various regulations for the library's conduct through the years. The opportunity to patronize the library was somewhat limited as the restricted hours of 6:30 to 9:00 on Saturday night would indicate. In 1888 it was voted to request the library to be open between Sept. 1st and May 1st at 4:00 and during the remainder of the year at '6 and ½ o'clock! This, of course, was limited to just Saturday of each week. It was voted in 1909 that the library be open three hours each weekday. It is interesting to note that presently the Holmes Public Library is open six days a week.

The library was opened to the public on January 8, 1877 and it had a list of 250 books with two magazines. One of these was a year's subscription to *Harpers Monthly* and the other a magazine called *St. Nicholas*. Dr. Holmes also contributed generously from his own private library. For several years an association known as the Library Association aided in the general operation of the library. On page 58 in this volume is a set of rules and regulations that certainly should prove enlightening and interesting. In 1894 it was voted that twenty-five dollars be allotted to the library for magazines if people would donate books of equal value. In the same year twenty dollars for works on agriculture and kindred subjects and fifteen dollars for general purposes were appropriated. Thus, it would seem that sometimes the town took it into its own hands to dictate the type of services for the library. In 1878 the town placed in the library for general use 296 volumes of records and reports, which included: six volumes of Massachusetts records, a complete set of Plymouth County records, two volumes of *Ichnology of New England* by Hitchcock and *Hitchcock's Geography Map of New England*.

The town historian keeps up a continuing system of binding Town Reports, and on the accumulation of five annual reports they are bound in one volume which is added to the collection in the library. The binding is done in duplicate and one set kept in reserve. In 1942 it was recorded in an article which I have had the privilege of reviewing that there were 35,500 books in our library. The circulation of the library reported in the trustees' report of 1969 was 30,186.

To establish that we are keeping in step with the times it may be worthwhile to report that a new facility in the library is a sound projector with a liberal film service that is available for use by the townspeople.

In 1882, near the present King's Supermarket, a library was set up in John Soule's home. This library was supported by town and state funds and served the neighboring school for twenty-five years. A book of the late Nettie Thomas circulated in this library.

In addition to the Holmes Library, the Cobb Library founded at Bryantville in 1900 is of interest to Halifax. This library was set up to serve the people of Hanson, Pembroke and Halifax. It is open on three occasions during the week and is under the direction of three trustees. The gift creating this fine institution was made by Rozilla Cobb.



Holmes Public Library — founded in 1876.



Holmes Public Library in 1976.

(Taken from Holmes Library 1878 Catalogue)

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Art. I. The room shall be open from 6½ o'clock to 9 P.M. every Saturday evening.

Art. II. Any inhabitant of the town of Halifax over twelve years of age shall be entitled to the use of the Library.

Art. III. One book may be taken at a time, and may be retained two weeks, unless the time be otherwise limited. The fine for the retention of any volume over the time specified shall be two cents for every day it is so retained.

Art. IV. No person, except the Librarian, shall be allowed to take books from the cases.

Art. V. All injuries to books, beyond a reasonable wear, and all losses, shall be made good to the satisfaction of the Trustees of the Library by the person liable.

Art. VI. No person owing a fine shall receive books from the Library until the same is paid.

Art. VII. Sojourners in the town may have the same privilege of using the Library as inhabitants, by first signing an agreement to abide by the regulations and to be subject to their fines and other penalties.

(Extract from the Laws, Chap. 59, Acts of 1867)

Whoever wilfully and maliciously writes upon, injures, defaces, tears, or destroys any book, plate, picture, engraving, or statue belonging to any law, town, city, or other public library, shall be punished by a fine of not less than five dollars, nor more than one thousand dollars, for every such offence.

(At a legal Town Meeting held November 7, 1876 the following action occurred)

Voted: To accept the proposition of Doct. Howland Holmes of Lexington in regard to a Library as follows:

The Library shall forever be public, permanent and free to all the citizens of the Town, and be known as the Holmes Library.

Its trustees shall be the Selectmen of the town for the time being, the school committee of the town for the time being, the settled clergymen of the town for the time being, and any practicing physicians of the town for the time being, who are Fellows of the Mass. Medical Society.

Said Trustees shall serve without compensation, and have the exclusive management of the Library, the purchase and repair of books, the preparation and enforcement of suitable Bylaws governing their use, the appointment of Librarian, etc., etc., and the said Trustees shall make a detailed report to the town annually, stating the general conditions of the Library, its whole number of volumes, the increase during the preceding twelve months, and the sources whence they were derived, and suggesting also its most pressing wants and the means of supplying them.

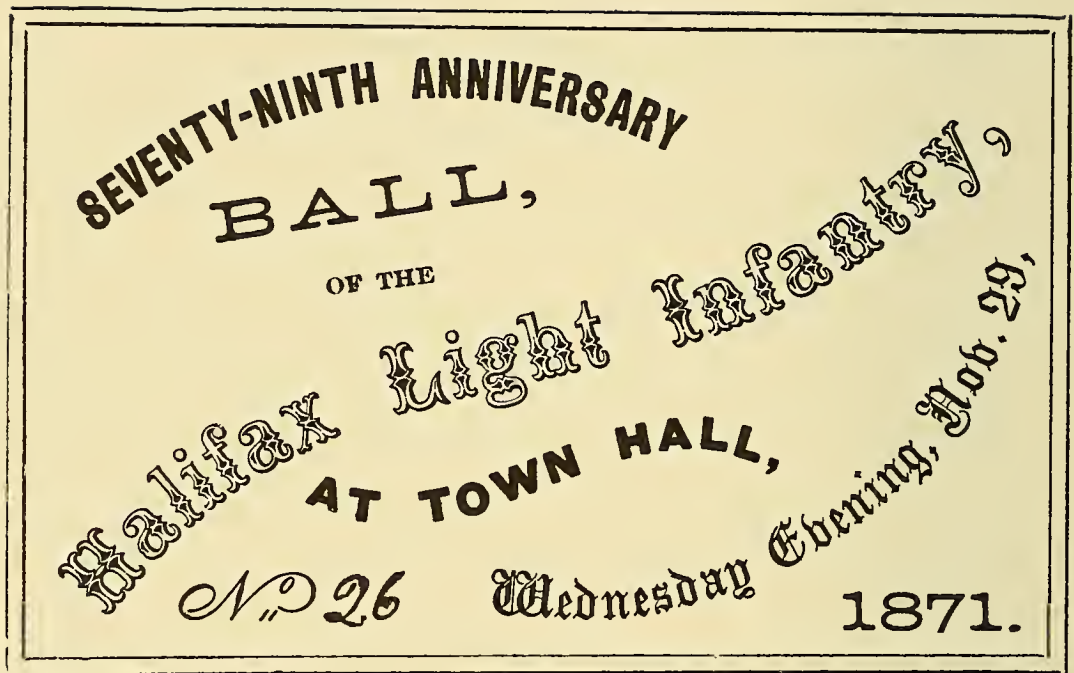
Voted: To appropriate one hundred dollars to add to the donation of Doct. Howland Holmes in aid of the Public Library.

Voted: That the thanks of the citizens of Halifax in Town Meeting assembled be given to Doct. Howland Holmes of Lexington for his generous gift in founding a Public Library for the benefit of the citizens of said Town.

Voted: That a copy of the above vote and the action of the Town in reference to said Library be sent to the said Doct. Howland Holmes by the Town Clerk.

A true record

Attest. Nathaniel Morton



The Halifax Militia Company was chartered in 1792 by Governor John Hancock. It had the longest continuous service of any militia company in the history of the State of Massachusetts.

SOCIAL

In the past there have been and at the present time there are several organized social groups in town, founded to meet the needs of people of all ages as they live and work.

The Militia Company, the oldest of all organized groups and formed when the town was founded, served both to protect the townspeople and bring men together. People grouped together to fill their agendas with activities that involved their everyday living. This is still true, be they church, militia, fraternal or just plain social organizations.

One such instance of a unifying activity was the annual Military Ball from which I have a ticket dated Nov. 26, 1871. The ticket states that it is the 79th Annual Ball of the Halifax Militia Co.; given the year on the ticket we can deduce that the Militia Co. was first formed in 1792. Governor John Hancock signed the charter establishing this company.

In each of the two clubs formed by young men in town during later years, there was a pool table. Eben Wood, now ninety years old, tells me that he took part in the activities of both these clubs. There was a pool table at the Monponsett Hotel at one time, and one as long ago as 1915 in the Fire Station. Today I play pool in my own home, a pastime which my relatives and neighbors enjoy with me. Playing pool nowadays is a common social activity, but not so when I was a boy. During those years the game had a backroom atmosphere.

The Halifax Farmers Club is not merely a social group though farming is no longer a major part of the activity in Halifax. The club was formed in 1876 and we continue to hold monthly meetings where some twenty-five diehards congregate.

The Halifax Sewing Circle has to be another of the important social groups organized in this town. However, the history of their activities is best placed later in this chapter.

During the Civil War a club called the Division Club was organized. An auxiliary branch of this organization was founded, though not much else is known of its activities.

In 1841, the Washingtonians was organized. Their primary theme was the abstention from imbibing in alcoholic beverages. They carried on until 1859. A similar group, the "Good Templars," was formed around the same time. When my mother was a young lady, she associated with this temperance group and my elderly friend, Nettie Thomas, still tells the story of her first meeting with my mother at such a temperance meeting.

The Halifax Farmers Club, previously mentioned, was formed in March of 1876. Originally it was open only to men, but later was reorganized in 1883 to admit women to membership. Van Buren Grover was the first Farmers Club president. He had moved from Rockland where he had been a shoe factory worker. I joined this group in Bridgewater at a meeting at Snow's Lodge. The occasion of my attendance was an address I was privileged to deliver before the club in the early 60's—the 1960's, that is! I suspect that the members decided to get me under cover of membership to spare themselves the repeated burden of having to listen to me as guest speaker again. The Farmers Club sponsored the first "Old Home Day" in Halifax in 1905. Frank D. Lyons was president of the club at the time. I have a season's program of the club from the year 1899 to 1900. At that time Jabez P. Thompson was president and my long-ago dear friend, Mrs. George W. Hayward, was secretary. A sampling of some of the meeting programs: December 13: "Question Box at Otis Pratt's" (That would be the David Briggs place as I know it); "Ladies Night at Mrs. George W. Hayward's," January 10: at Sylvanus Bourne's with the program, "Are Labor-Saving Machines a Help to the Farmer?"; November 1: at Daniel Blake's, "Traveler's Night"; December 6: at W. T. Hayward's, "Do Dress and Style Lend Dignity to the Farmer and His Wife?" led by H. M. Porter and Mrs. H. M. Bosworth; February 7 at G. C. M. Porter's—To sort of balance the earlier Ladies Night, a Gentleman's Night was planned. In Elroy Thompson's *History of Plymouth, Norfolk, and Plympton Counties*, was the statement that "The first farmers' organization in the country, still in existence, is the Farmers Club of Halifax."

The Halifax Boy Scouts was established in January 1914 (*Bryantville News*). (While not in chronological order, it did come to my attention in my newspaper research that the brothers Sturtevant, Ernest and George, had a gunning stand at Stump Pond in 1904 and bagged twenty geese in that year.)

The "New Ideas Club" was the name adopted by a group that met initially on January 13, 1909 at St. Clair Primes' home on River Street. It held forth for several years and did worthy services on many occasions. Back as far as March of 1880 we discover evidence of the Halifax Dramatic Society or Company.

In 1841, the Washingtonians proposed the abolition of any beverages that contained an appreciable amount of alcohol. This club operated in Halifax for eighteen years until 1859. About sixty men and women joined its rolls, including Charles Paine as a charter member. He was also county commissioner for twenty-five years and it was here, on his place, that the cigar manufacturing enterprise which he shared with a brother was carried on. Mrs. T. D. Morton worked at the shop and her daughter, Mrs. Hilda Thomas, provided this tidbit of information.

In the early 1890's, the Good Templars attempted to curb the use of liquor. James Thomas and family were active in this group and my mother became associated with it upon moving to Halifax from her native East Bridgewater.

Other than the currently operating service and social clubs that require some attention here, a club called the Division should be of interest. A letter from the Civil War battlefield to Morton Thompson in 1863 makes mention of the organization and the officers listed. The list follows with letters designating titles preceding the names. I have no way of determining the meanings of these letters, but I knew some of the people mentioned. These officers were elected in

1863: W. P., Leonard Tillson; W. A., E. Austin Pratt; F. S., Edmund Churchill; T. T. R., B. Bryant; R. G., George F. Lyon; A. B. S., Henry Porter; C., Freddie Wood; A. C., Cosh Drew; P. W. L., A. Fuller; Inside Sentinel, Frank Bryant, Outside Sentinel, J. P. Thompson, and Lady Officers: Abbie Holmes, Mary Washburn, and Abbie Tillson. The Lady Usher was Lucy Richmond. In a letter to Mr. Morton Thompson, there was included this remark: "Do you not think we have a good lot of officers on both sides?" This both sides reference may indicate the men and women were separate in their seating.

Through the years there has been an abiding interest in athletics on the part of Halifax residents. Formal teams were left to communities for the most part where the problem of numbers was of less concern. In rural America individual sports predominated. Wrestlers, boxers, track and field events, cyclists and horse racing comprised the usual spread of recreation except for the traditional hunting and fishing sports that all country boys indulge in. In the fall of the year there were usually several organized fox hunts in town. The cooler weather was also the prime season for hunting skunks and coons. Ice fishing on Monponsett Pond was popular as well. Today horseback riding and motorcycling are in vogue with the newly installed Edison Electric line from Plymouth to the Metropolitan area—a favored course for these motorbike riders. Water sports are quite popular in Halifax as is basketball, both indoors and out. Girls softball has a busy schedule each summer and some softball is played by the young men of the Town. Little League's heavy program seems to outdraw all others in the summer months.

In the last decade of the 19th century and into the first half of this one, baseball had its heyday. Teams traveled from one town to another by horse-drawn coach before the days of the automobile. This pleasant means of travel was often the only way a young man could socialize with his own kind. I recall one incident of some sixty years ago where I remember that there was a jug in the coach which seemed to attract the attention of most all the players from time to time. I might suggest even that a whiff or swallow from this jug was not unlike the boost our own athletes get today from a large gulp of oxygen!

With the limited mobility and the varied demands of days gone by to do the chores, there was little time left to spend in recreation. Eben Wood and William Leach, two good friends of mine, are, however, able to recall the names of their schoolmates who played ball and who was pitcher, etc.

Social activity did speed up by 1915 with the introduction of the automobile. The Grange did its share in promoting programs for young people's participation and athletics were becoming a part of the program in secondary school education. In my high school years, games played at Bridgewater High School were baseball, basketball and some rather unorganized football. We formed a track team in my sophomore year and took part in the Brockton Fair meet sponsored by the Amateur Athletic Assn. of America. The first year we entered we won the High School Relay Championship giving the program of track and field a great start in our school. At about this same time in the South Shore area, again playing one another on an informal basis in baseball, soon an organization or league was founded for the purpose of making up a schedule. It was called the Mayflower League and it was organized in 1920. Being the first president of the league was perhaps the greatest thrill of my life, at least up to that time. The picture of



Halifax Town Baseball Team, champions of the Mayflower League in 1923. Back row, l to r: H. Ramsdell, G. Baker, B. Remick, L. Mantyla. Middle row: A. Braddock, L. Billings, C. Devitt, J. Baker, E. Hayward. Front row: P. Willette, A. Heinonen.

the silver trophy displayed on this page is perhaps one of the choice mementos of those that remain from the days when Halifax was "Champion." The cup will go to the Historical Society. Other early athletic activities were of a more slippery nature such as shinnying up greased poles or catching greased pigs, some contrast when compared with today's more tame sports. Street hockey, backyard dribble and pop basketball seem quite roughhouse. Of course there were the tug-of-war contests. My father sat in the anchor-man spot on the local team and, though his modesty was superb, he always showed a glowing countenance when praised for his team's successes. "Throwing the Rolling Pin" was our way of bowing to the early trends in the women's liberation movement. I remember Esther Dennet as a frequent winner for she could cast the thing a long way, indeed!

Some Things About Some Things

There have been many social groups among the Halifax people, and the Sewing Society could well be credited with having the greatest impact on the social life of this community. This legendary group of women seemed to have heeded the call. This group was comprised of the female membership of the church, to

serve when a good cause would come to their attention. Since the church was in the center of town and the town was very caught up in the activities of the church, these womenfolk were involved in seeing that necessary things got done. Great credit can rightfully be bestowed on this group of courageous and faithful women. Never dismayed and exemplifying the virtue of "gentle persuasion", they kept the watch. Very few subsequent "orders" or groups of women could be characterized by the understanding and compassion of these true "Help-mates." Yes, the Halifax Sewing Circle played an important role in the history of this community. They were always contributing and often saved the day!

It's original name was the "Halifax Benevolent Society." The group organized in 1842. Women had equal franchise in the church, but men exercised total control of the non-sectarian aspects of the colonial life, namely, Civil Government. In 1800, women were permitted to vote for School Committee members. Full franchise was gained in 1920. And they have done much to demonstrate that "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world!" And the Sewing Circle never flinched when asked to aid. The complete records of this organization are located in the vault in the Halifax Town Hall. They include the Benevolent Society's constitution: "The ladies of Halifax being desirous of aiding in the great cause of missions, convened at the house of Mrs. Crooker, Wednesday August 3, 1842, and formed themselves into a mission sewing circle, the object of which is to provide clothing for a Mission Station in Lower Canada under the direction of Madame Fuller." There were present at this meeting six members, "consequently but little business was transacted." The record continues and includes, "Public Notice was given at the meeting of the Society next Wednesday, and notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, several members were present." In 1852 a paid bill is noted from Steele and Burt of Boston for 485 feet of pew cushions. There is a reciprocal transaction: "in 1853, help on the new Church and a present of \$100 was voted to the Sewing Circle of Halifax by the First Religious Society."

One intriguing entry: "A Mrs. Aroline Soule has seen fit to align herself with the Kingston Unitarian Church and her wish to volunteer to teach Sunday School was rejected." Mrs. Soule had been a long-time resident of Halifax; evidently there were no hard feelings about her rejection since a later entry records the dedication of the new Church in 1852 when three poems written by Mrs. Soule were read on that occasion. Things must have kept on a fairly even keel for awhile since still another entry tells that Mrs. A. Soule was "Dr. to Soc. for the making of three pairs of flannel draws at 12 cents-total 36 cents." In May of 1856 a committee was sent to Kingston to study the church fence. Later, the material for our new church fence was acquired and the cost and the name of the company was recorded in our town records. In 1865 Halifax was billed \$163; this can only imply that a fence program was in progress over a nine-year period. These records are fascinating to one who is hunting for information that sheds light on the customs of living which are in contrast with our practices today. I am tempted to devote quantities of time to this rich find. Only a few more items, however, and I'll leave this field in which I love to roam.

The Sewing Circle was occupied with much relief work during the war years, 1861-1865. The record notes the moving from Halifax of Mrs. Cyrus Thompson. Her husband eventually became a renowned artist. The war years and the



Plowing contest during Old Home Day, 1907. Today this site is opposite the entrance to Hemlock Lane.



Ready for a "Joy Ride".

accompanying hardships make entries at this time very interesting: "Feb., 16, 1863, received from Mrs. Brainard seven dollars in payment for the same amount loaned to her." One may assume that the society sometimes acted as a loan association. In 1873, the society reorganized. The new president was recorded as being Mrs. Capt. Wm. Tillson, vice-president, Mrs. Albert Thompson, secretary, Mrs. Sarah E. Poole, and treasurer, Nettie Thomas, a dear friend of mine. She once told me that there was a lull in activities of the "Circle" but when Mel Crooker's wife died and did not have a proper outfit to be buried in, the neighbors again organized and helped the Crooker family and the Society became active again. Had it not been re-established, posterity would never have had the following feat recorded: At one of the fairs sponsored by this group a popular event or contest took place. The feat was to hold a flat-iron out at arms's length. The woman who held it the longest length of time was the winner. Lucy Packard is recorded on the pages of history as a winner of this contest. Other frolicsome affairs made up the social life of our predecessors. Specifically, on April 13, 1873, the society sponsored an event listed in the records as follows: "Voted to have a Levee on the Eve of May 8th, also to have a post office, grab box and guess cake." Admission price was 50 cents including supper. Mr. Watson cooked oysters. On the same date, the result of the "Levee" was added: "Party took in \$247.29. Immediately \$200 was voted to paint the Church." In 1875, on July 21, "Voted to have a Croquet Party. Held at the Town Hall. Sale of supper tickets, totalled \$17.50. Ice Cream came to \$5.20. Party was very successful." (This is the first time I have come upon the mention of ice cream in the records.)

Another item: "Voted to have a Centennial Party." Date was March 1876. Proceeds reported were \$155.69. I shall not add any more details on the Sewing Circle except to say it was inactive after the Civil War for some time. "May 1, 1888—the Circle meeting held in the Town Hall, 19 present." The report of the Secretary: "The Ladies Sewing Circle was organized Feb. 26, 1873 with 15 members and membership then increased to 50 members—some wish to disband. Voted not to. Fines were a problem and they were left to a later decision."

On this subject: "May 7, 1879: we meet today for our sixth anniversary." (How hard for me to abandon this topic.) Sept. 30, 1879: "Sewing Circle and Church and Parish put on a party for Mrs. Shaw and family in the Town Hall from 6½-10 pm. The exercises consisted of speaking and reading. A simple collation was served at ½ past 8. Expenses of eats:"

One barrel of apples	\$2.50
25 pounds of grapes	1.00
2 pounds of coffee	.76
Express	.38

May 5, 1885—Annual Meeting. The report begins: "The ceaseless roll of time has again brought us to the first day of May, the appointed time for our Annual Meeting."

Coexisting with the Sewing Society was a group that organized in 1869. I can only report that in my opinion a break was the intent of this act. The record books of the Sewing Circle were turned upside down and the new group was open to both men and women. In a meeting on March 16, 1869, the



Climbing the greased pole during Old Home Day, 1900, in back of the Town Hall.

circle was organized by adopting the following constitution: "This society shall be called Halifax Benevolent Social Circle." "April 14, 1881, voted to give Mrs. Ira Sturtevant two dollars in consideration for her having entertained three ladies from the Temperance Union." From Book #4 which carries the records of this group I find an early entry that interests me. On October 12, 1881, "Voted to expend 50¢ to repair street lamp." This was our first street light! It was located at the corner of Cherry Street and Plymouth Street in front of the church. In this same year, the Benevolent Society manifested its intentions to live up to the title under which it operated. The club "voted to get some mosquito netting for papering the church." In this same year, the Sewing Circle went on a picnic to Brant Rock. "Traveled in Bailey's Barge." In 1900, had a party on August 8 and "made \$44.78 and sold 15 gallons of ice cream." In 1902, on February 19th voted "to get up a town meeting dinner and to have beans and meat and instead of loaves of bread, 4 loaves of brown bread." In 1904, the constitution was rewritten and the name changed to the Ladies Sewing Circle of Halifax. In 1913 the Society paid to shingle the church at a cost of \$750. If you're wondering how they kept their budget in balance, consider this: "1916, fed the town meeting and made enough to get out of debt." One last item with this much-loved group of townswomen (the men as participating members didn't last long) illustrated life's vicissitudes and limitations: In 1916, "A plan was made to go to Mayflower Grove but not many went because many had no way of getting there." There were many minor problems to cope with in their long history but they usually faced up to them. For example, by 1894 the society had assumed the position that many if not all problems were their problems, i.e., "Voted that Mr. Dean (preacher) be asked to forbid the children playing inside the fence surrounding the Church."

In 1905, a most important social organization was founded in Halifax—the Grange. This national organization formed a common bond, especially between all the rural peoples in America. Our first meeting was held in Halifax on Dec. 7, 1905. The charter members were: Fred Simpson, Thomas D. Morton, Jared B. Baker, Ella Baker, Homer Tillson, James Thomas, William Tillson. For fifty-six years the meeting nights were on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. The program of this organization was aimed at the occupational and social needs of a rural people. Industry had not yet loosed its muscles on our land. Transportation hadn't winged itself across the ledger for most people. Then, social groupings started up when people began to settle together. And the club movement that swept over America at the meeting of the two centuries was the Grange.

There is little point in listing all the benefits sponsored by this organization in a community like Halifax. The Grange formed a bond of fellowship nationwide. It split its emphasis between the vocational and social needs of Americans. Its ritual was beautiful, wholesome and inspiring. Just as the need is evident today for orders like the Lions, Kiwanis, Knights of Columbus, Masons, Rotarians and others, to cement the bond of good fellowship, so did the Grange come along at an opportune time in our history. Perhaps the Women's Liberation movement will bring a similar strong dedication to Americans for the purpose of making a better America. I was deeply involved in the work of the Patrons of Husbandry. I saw the toning up of the entire community as a result of the Grange Program.

I saw many individuals blossom into leaders while carrying out responsibilities of this order. Membership included youth and older citizens. Indeed, the Grange had everything. The Charter was surrendered in 1968. The Grange promoted a program to aid the agricultural needs of our town. This national organization met a great need in America. Under the national organization came State and Pomona and then the subordinate Granges. This step by step grouping from the local to the national level surely lent much status to the organization; with much of America made up of rural districts, we found a great mass of citizens with a common interest in the Grange and its programs. One more effect of this great program that I can see now, after many years of analyzing and weighing, was the opportunity it afforded many people to work, and lead and grow as officers in this fine organization—the Grange. This discipline of the ritual and the tight organization offered training that was comparable, in its way, to formal schooling. Such training in many cases lasted for a great length of time, as many chose to work through a series of offices. With the guiding influence of the Grange ritual and the carrying out of assignments, with the mingling and participation in affairs along with a broad segment of the general public and with the reassuring confidence that comes from working with others in similar walks of life, it is no wonder that the Grange grew into a common denominator, cementing the bonds between Americans with high ideals and a practicality that only the working classes know. No movement in the history of this nation has had the wholesome effect that the National Grange and its State Granges, Pomona Granges and Subordinate Granges had on this growing republic. Much of my own feeling for this organization comes from a personal association with the members of my own subordinate Grange group and, to a lesser degree, with the Pomona or district group and then on to the State Grange. It seemed to broaden our horizons, if you will, when one of us was chosen from our group to be a representative at conventions or on committees in groups larger than our immediate order. I shall never forget the sense of wonderment I experienced while sitting on the auditorium stage in the City of Worcester next to Governor Coolidge and Mrs. Coolidge in exercises conducted by the State Grange. As I recall, I was the youngest overseer of a Grange ever elected in this State. However important this may or may not be to the world at large, it was pretty special for me at that time in my limited experience.

My good friend Eben Wood tells me that the Harlow boys organized a club on the corner of Summit and Thompson Streets in the late 1800's. The clubhouse made a meeting place for the Thompsons, the Harlow boys and the Vickerys and others. The young men had a pool table in this club among other things. The building was later used as a home by Bill Vickery well into the first half of this century. There was another clubhouse on the corner of Holmes and Plymouth Street. There is no record of its origin nor of anything which may have taken place there. The mark locating it on the 1832 map of Halifax comprises the total story of this club.

The Halifax Improvement Society was founded in 1906 and held its first meeting in September of that year. Hazel Peterson was the first president and Marion Angus, treasurer. In 1909, this group purchased the new scenery for the new Town Hall Stage. In 1900, the club voted \$50 for a bridge at the end of Ocean Avenue. On April 27, 1911, this group voted \$25 toward the establish-



Halifax Fair scene, 1906, in back of the Congregational Church.



Halifax Sewing Circle — about 1915.

ment of the Halifax Fire Department. My father, Jared B. Baker, was the first Fire Chief. Many years later I became a member of the Fire Department, one of the reasons being a pool table that was in the fire station. I like to play pool!

The New Ideas Club had its first meeting on January 13, 1909. There were ups and downs with this group and it is not certain when it disbanded.

There were many summer cottages owned or controlled by groups of people who clubbed together around the shores of the lakes during the early 1900's. Some supervision was required on occasion to hold down the exuberant tempo of their sociability. One summer, under the direction of Constable Chester Waterman, I aided in policing this beat and I still have the implements of my trade—the billy, the handcuffs, the badge and the appointment certificate from the town fathers (the selectmen).

Down through the years men grouped together to build Hunting Lodges on the shores of Monponsett Lake, on Silver Lake and also on Stump Pond. Many gunning stands came and went. Schindler's Stand was popular at the turn of the century. But the stand "par excellence" was at Widgeon Point on Silver Lake. Owned by a group of affluent Brockton businessmen, the stand later became a retreat for a group of priests. In the early 1900's, it was burned to ashes.

As of today, the following clubs operate in Halifax, outside church affiliated groups: American Legion, VFW, Amvets, Kiwanis, Lions, Halifax Country Club and the Jaycees and, of course, the auxiliary groups that go with some of these organizations. Also, there are organizations, such as the Parent-Teachers Association, exclusively for service to school-age children. Other active community groups include the Farmers Club, Historical Society and Halifax Reading Club.

Long ago there was a story written about Halifax by Mrs. Francis Humphrey. Her story tells of experiences and escapades while growing up in Halifax. The tale is based on historical fact, as the home of the book's main characters was the local tavern. The activities of this public house were often shared with the family. The Tavern, or Pope's Tavern as it was popularly known, is now the home of Violet Brown and is across from the Congregational Church. From billings of public affairs and newspaper reports about tavern activities, we get a fine picture of the "goings on" in those times. For example, John Quincy Adams was nominated here to serve in the 22nd Congress after he had served as the 5th President. Daniel Webster was a frequent visitor to this hostelry. Also, many Church Councils congregated here since it was the center of the county. The Martin Bosworth Tavern or Ordinary may have been the first "Oasis" to be sure. The Dunbar Inn of Revolutionary War times may lay its claim to fame, but we have a story of Pope's Tavern that is hard to beat.

Until the middle of this century, the Hotel Monponsett was the modern-day accommodation for travelers and a resort for summer sojourners to the lakes. This establishment was founded in 1890, when Maurice Schindler traveled from Boston to build a hotel. The first building burned in 1895. The new hotel lasted until 1968, when it burned down again. The loss of the proprietor's son in the fire proved to be one of the saddest events in recent times. This young man, Jeffrey L. Clairmont, was nine years old at the time of his death.

During this century several lives have been lost in the lakes area by drowning. The growing awareness of the possibility of accidents has brought the use of lifeguards to the town beach during the bathing season. Swimming lessons and

water safety courses are also offered. Lives were lost when a cut was dug under Plymouth Street at the foot of Hathaway Hill. An earth slide buried two men in 1911. Their names were Samuel Maki and Samuel Jussila. I also remember a fatal accident that occurred at about this same time. Andrena Edgar was killed when she poured kerosene on live coals in a cookstove in her home, and she perished when consumed by flames caused by the explosion.

Since the advent of the automobile there have been numerous auto accidents, and several deaths have resulted through the years. Other memorable accidents were when Jabe Thompson was gored by a bull and Mrs. Pope broke her arm when thrown from her carriage while on a trip to Bridgewater.

In 1960, John Boutemain was falling and trimming trees on 9th Avenue, when a partially severed half of a double tree trunk twisted and swung him between the two halves of the tree, crushing him to death.

One finds little evidence of destructive fires in the early years of Halifax. I have described the burning of the factory complex in 1845, set by the disgruntled son of the proprietor. This quite likely stands as our worst conflagration. On Feb. 15, 1874, William E. Sturtevant left his home in Hanson and came through Sodom Woods to Thompson Street where he ambushed Mary Buckley and attacked Simeon Sturtevant, his great uncle, and another great uncle Thomas Sturtevant. This resulting triple murder has to be the worst crime ever committed in Halifax. "Bill Everett," as he was called, was twenty-four years old when he murdered these people.

Once, when visiting a neighboring town, Marshfield, my good friend and fellow researcher, James McVicar of Braintree, and I decided to inspect the Hatch Hill area. Being of a neighborly spirit, Mr. Hatch added a bit of levity to our visit. When he discovered I was from Halifax, he asked, "Are you from the Halifax where the woman died twice?"

By way of explanation he told me this story which he says is the gospel truth. It seems that in a house on Thompson Street within sight of my home there lived an elderly couple. The wife passed on, causing her husband to go into an apparent state of shock. His noncommunicative state continued right up to the funeral services for his departed spouse. The "last rites" were held in the parlor of their home. Because of the short distance from the home to the grave, the bearers escorting the casket carried it to the cemetery without benefit of a hearse. With the procession in order, the ascension up the stone steps at the cemetery was begun. But, alas, the coffin was dropped. In the hush of the astonished gathering, a voice cried out, "Let me out! Let me out!" The route was hurriedly retraced, the casket was opened and the re-instituted wife was ministered to. She survived for only a few days, however. During this time the husband had continued in his state of numbness. And in a few days she expired and the procession went back over the same path to the grave site. The route was the same and it was made without incident until the marchers came directly to the stone steps. Suddenly the husband came to life and cried, "For God's sake and for mine, don't drop her again!" Two stones mark their dual graves.

Recollections come to mind each Memorial Day when I mark the graves of all veterans with a flag. Mrs. Albert Thomas, a WW II widow, and myself have performed this service for the past several years. This kind of attention paid to our cemeteries often proves rewarding. Recently, I met a descendant of a Civil



First Fire Station. Building was originally Schoolhouse No. 1, built in 1845 and located at the corner of Routes 106 and 58. In 1910 it was moved to its present site.

War soldier who has in his possession a flag carried by his ancestor. The colors were of the Halifax Light Infantry. It is quite possible that this most precious piece of memorabilia will soon come into the collection of the Halifax Historical Society. There are a total of three public cemeteries in Halifax, as well as evidence of burials in private sectors. On Thompson Street, next to Mrs. Hilda Thomas' house, a site holds the remains of the Major Drew family. On River Street opposite the old Perkins farm, known to us as the Irving Minott place, stands a collection of gravestones. They are set back from the street and will soon be lost from view unless the underbrush is cleared away. There is also a grave on Hudson Street, which marks the resting place of a Revolutionary War soldier. There was a tomb on Thompson Street across from the cemetery, plus one at the Central Cemetery and one at the Thompson Street Cemetery. The Thompson Street tomb was owned by the Tillson family in the early days of the Town's history. Until recently there was a tomb on Pond Street near Hudson Street. Little is now left of this burial vault except a quarried stone marked 1826.

In the productive years of Ebenezer Wood, we had a gravestone manufactory in Halifax. His shop, on Thompson Street, was opposite the next to last house before the Middleboro line. His craftsmanship was respected and his product much in demand. His great grandson helped me to identify Ebenezer Wood's place of business and pointed out some of his gravestones. Both Mr. Wood's and his wife's stones were prepared long before their passing. They can be seen in the Thompson Street Cemetery. Along this same line, I have learned that a burying place for Indians was located at the corner of Elm and Hudson Streets. This spot was discovered when road construction was underway a few years ago at this intersection.

Much of what I have discussed to this point concerns places. However, travel and modes of travel particularly fascinate me. Topography determined the very first paths in Halifax. To go from one place to another, in the Indian days, travelers walked the dry ridges when possible. The Indian Trail crossed the Great Cedar Swamp on a ridge running somewhat parallel to the Herring River. It continued to Stone Weir and, after crossing at this fording place, it went on to the present Plymouth Street. A trail also ran from the Mattakeesett Ponds over a course quite similar to our present Route 36.

In the year 1668, we find mention of a Plymouth Trail. This is some five years after the Tomsons built their log cabin in Halifax (or what was destined to be Halifax some sixty-one years later). Thompson Street, a narrow oxcart trail, branches off this Plymouth Trail and was the way to the fort in Middleboro. The Plymouth Trail came into Halifax by crossing the Plympton line near the Old Sturtevant place. Then it followed the shores of the lake behind the Old Cemetery out to where Routes 106 and 58 now intersect. From this point the trail turned northwest and followed the shore of the West Lake toward Orchard Point, then turned south to intersect the Old Indian Trail from Stone Weir. Picking up the Plymouth Road again at the Blacksmith Shop (the intersection of Circuit and Old Plymouth), we follow Circuit to its meeting with East Street and on into the Town of Bridgewater.

Fordings also give accurate indications of the existence of these trails. These are identified on old maps. Fording places have been detected on the Taunton

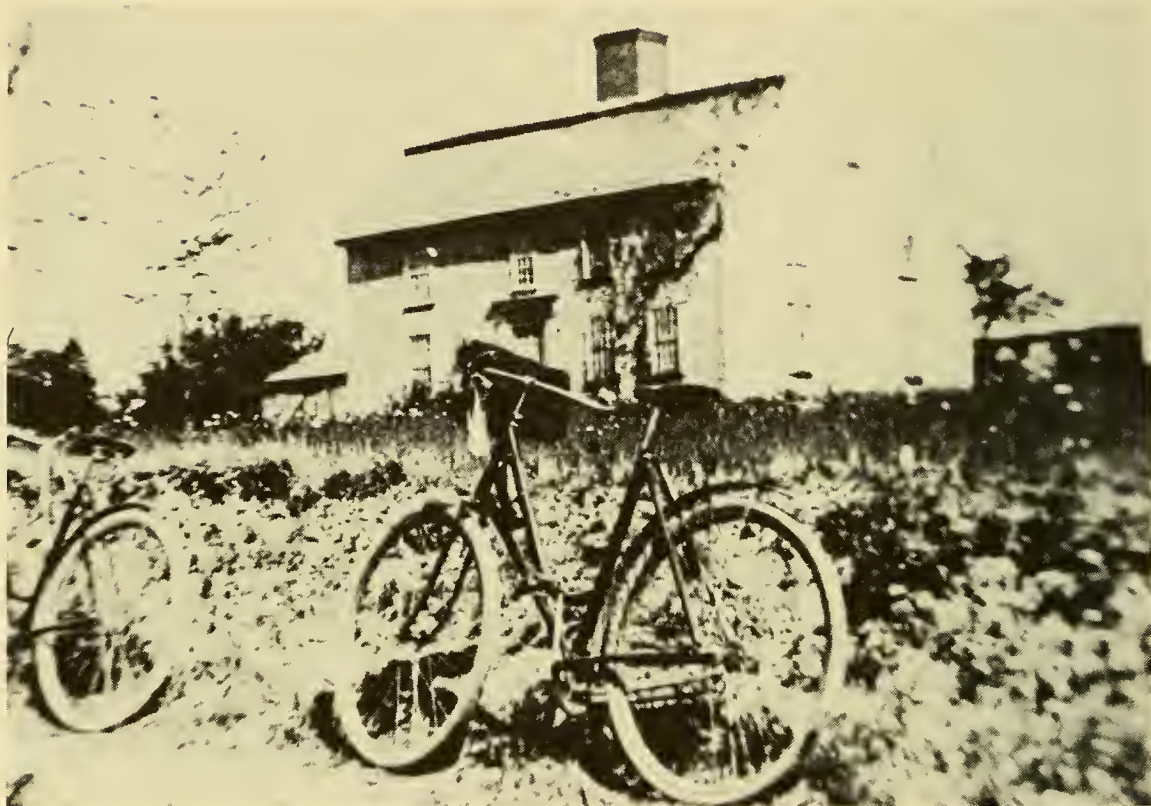


Thompson Cemetery on Thompson Street (1½ acres) was granted to the town by Thomas Tomson in 1742. The deed is recorded in the Registry of Deeds, Plymouth, Book 36, Page 179.

River a short distance upstream from Childs Bridge. This is the major stream that touches our town. The Winnetuxet River, which runs into the Great, or Taunton River, not far below the Childs Bridge, had a fording place at the bridges on Thompson Street. In the early days, there was a fording place on Raven Brook as well. This would be about where Wood Street now crosses Raven Brook. We find frequent mention of Stone Weir as the crossing that determined the routes traveled by the early settlers. Until the advent of the hard-surfaced roads in the first two decades of this century, one could find a turn-out beside the stone bridges covering minor brooks. I often drove my "hitch" into the turn-out on Franklin Street and allowed "dobbin" to drink from the cold flowing water. When approaching the centers of towns around us one would usually come upon a stone trough where the thirst of horses and oxen could be satisfied. In Halifax, although we had no watering trough, we were well irrigated and had several watering places. Just over Hathaway Hill, on Plymouth Street near the Bridgewater line, was a turn-out watering place on the small stream that passes under the road. Near the present site of our Fire Station was a very good natural and picturesque watering trough. Today we have town water supplied to the lakes area, an early development, and we have installed many water mains in other parts of the town. Originally we tied into the Hanson town lines. The town water well is at the rear of Richmond Park, with the reservoir at the rear of the Church and Town Hall. With all due respect to well-intentioned people involved in this fine addition to our public utilities, one wonders if no alternative to this horrible looking bubble suspended on a quadruped underpinning could have been fashioned from the minds of men who, seemingly, can overcome almost any impediment that looms on the horizon.

In the early days, an open spring determined where a family would plan a permanent home. John Tomson built his log cabin near a spring. Then came the open dug well. These were commonplace even into the 1900's. They ranged from twenty to forty feet in depth. The well at our home was exactly forty feet from well curb to water at the bottom of the walled-up round hole, with sides absolutely perpendicular. The wellsweep was the first method used for drawing water. Our system came later and was a rope rolling over a pulley. On either end of the rope were buckets made of wood. The rope was long enough to lower one bucket into the water while raising the second bucket to the top. The buckets roughly offset each other in weight so one was actually lifting only the water brought up to within reach of the water drawer. Since that era of the old "Wooden Bucket," there have been various other methods for procuring water for domestic and farm use. I knew of a system of storing rain water collected from the watershed from a series of roofs that covered a barn and an attached shed. This water ran into a tank at eaves-level and was piped into a faucet for sink use and non-drinking purposes.

The pitcher pump came to be a familiar sight in the yards of most homes. A refinement of this rough cast-iron utensil was the copper pump. When I came home in 1928, I used a copper pump. There followed the introduction of the force pump. This instrument delivered water through valves under pressure and threw a steady stream of water as long as the pumping of the valves was continued. The pitcher pump, in contrast, dropped only one valve, quickly



Dunbar Tavern on Plymouth Street was a noted hostelry used as an inn throughout the pre-Revolutionary period and, also, through the first half of the 1800's.

submerging it into the momentarily sustained water column in the well pipe; then, on depressing the handle, the valve at the bottom of the plunger would close and trap a small supply of water. One could continue to push down the handle and the plunger would bring up the confined water and spill it through an outlet or spout at the top of the pump. On tripping the valve on the pitcher pump the column of water standing in the pipe would lose its vacuum and the pipe would tend to empty immediately back into the underground source. In winter, when the weather threatened to "freeze," the water standing in the pipe could burst it. Therefore, we would empty the line back to the level underground to below where it would not freeze. We would need to prime the pump when water was once again needed. Gas engines were used to push pistons up and down or forward and back to bring forth water until the much less demanding electric motor came to supply us automatically with water.

One could hardly leave this subject without introducing the mystical diviner and his divining rod. Tradition compelled my brother James and I to bring in the peer of "Diviners" when we decided to drive a well by the summer camp of James' property. Mr. Chester Washburn, 85 years young, was chosen as diviner and many of our close friends gathered for the exercises. Mr. Washburn, from Middleboro, was the father of two of our close friends, Warren and Reginald, of the Washburn Lumber Company. We supplied him with a forked stick and fell into a processional line of curious onlookers. Mr. Washburn finally settled on a spot near the camp and gave each of us a try at the stick. Needless to say, testimony was conflicting and indecisive and I and the others were left puzzled. Nonetheless, the privilege of being with the old gentleman was much appreciated.

Our first Post Office building is located at the rear of the Zeb Thompson place on Plymouth Street (now the L. P. Brouillard home). Originally the Post Office was included in a cluster of buildings called the Poole Enterprises. These buildings were located in front of the Memorial Boulder east of our present Town Hall. On my 1832 map of the town, this Post Office shows up again. Some evidence of the barred windows and doors are still conspicuous on the old structure. Perhaps this choice old relic will one day be restored and re-established in its original spot or at some other appropriate place.

A "tramp" house was once located on almost the exact spot as our Town Library. In the 1800's, people wandering from place to place were granted free sleeping quarters for one night stops. Our "tramp" house had wall bunks and ample but coarse blankets to protect against the cold. A fire was maintained in cold weather. In 1905, when the Central School was built, this "tramp" house was appraised by town authorities and it was decided to move it to the rear of the new schoolhouse to be used as an outhouse. Since this information is somewhat historical, it may be well to report another item along this line from the superintendent's report of school affairs. At about or just before this period of time, it seems that the scholars from the several district schools were brought together and introduced to the program of a Centralized School System. The Town Hall facilities were appropriated for use until the completion of the new Central School on Plymouth Street. Actually the restroom accommodations were inadequate and perceptive minds quietly made an adjustment of one of the town's essential accoutrements at one of the abandoned district schools and



Wellsweep — located on the Albert Wood place on Thompson Street
near the Middleboro line.



Gravestone Factory on Thompson Street, opposite Albert Wood place. During much of the 1800's it was operated by Ebenezer Wood.

brought it to supplement the facilities at the Old Town Hall. In retrospect, it is as simple as this: You cannot move children to new quarters without moving needed accommodations to meet the needs of the whole child. The report covering this service to the town was delightful. I quote it here:

“At this point in behalf of the town, we thank Messrs Richmond, Soule and Crooker who gratuitously moved a building (an important adjunct to decency) from school house # 1 for use of the schools.”

In the evolution of this institution, now known as “rest room,” the “Water Closet” was the next step on the way to our current system. So that these terms may not be lost to posterity, they are listed here as “Pot,” “Chamber Mug,” “Vessel” and “Thunder Jug!” For one who lived a long time before modern plumbing had reached our area and also having experienced the conditions and facilities of war, in respect to these things, it seems as if man's greatest progress has been in the area of sanitation. With all apologies to Chick Sayles, and while continuing to preserve my outhouse and also having an interest in the eight-holer on the green in Rochester, I will close this subject for good.

Oscar Gassett has been head of the Volunteer Fire Department for many years. In connection with the group there is a specially trained water rescue team. Because of the mutual arrangement with nearby towns, we find that this last group of specialists frequently get to take part in water rescue work covering a considerable area. While our Police Force is no more a club than the Fire

Department, one thinks of both groups in the sense of belonging together and, hence, as a kind of club. The Police Department actually came into its status as a department during the early 1900's. Charles Donati was the first chief. He was followed by Elvin Wood. We have since expanded to six full-time officers and four part-time men. Chief Howard Waterman was appointed in 1961 and has life tenure.

While listing groups of men engaged in town work we should mention the Highway Department. From the very beginning town men were elected to oversee the roads and bridges. Usually men were chosen with the definite idea that they would care for the roads in the vicinity of their homes. The inducement to care for roads was the chance to work off tax obligations. Sometimes the highway surveyors were responsible to their fellow townspeople to guarantee proper disposal of funds for road work. On occasion, when snow shoveling was the only way to get the roads passable, every able-bodied man would turn out and dig away the drifts. The shovelers would be paid and the listings would show in the Town Report. The names usually just about matched a male voting list for the town. Another reason for local care and service was to keep the roads passable in spring when mud was man's most trying enemy. Gravel spread on roads would be packed hard. Workers were few and the cost of hauling high, so only patches were repaired as needed. This activity, too, became a neighborhood affair. Many reports in the Town Record mention locations and the number of loads of gravel spread. Laborers, teamsters, graders, stone masons, carpenters and others show up in the Town Records. Clifford Hayward was the first highway surveyor I knew. He was followed by Herbert Ramsdell who, after several years in this position, was induced by the Town of Middleboro to become their Highway Superintendent. He was followed by Gilbert Thompson who was followed by Roland H. Minott, who held the position in Halifax for several years. His son, Irving Minott, succeeded him and was voted life tenure. He retired in 1970. His successor was Frank Dias, who served during 1970. Ceasar Martin was elected to this position in 1971 and filled it until his death in 1975. Presently this office is held by Ralph E. Hayward, Jr. The old Grange Shed at the rear of the Town Hall and church was used as headquarters for this department. Prior to this there was a road shed at the foot of Meeting House Hill, back from the road a distance. Previous to this, the old Hearse House was located here. The town had the present highway building erected in 1969. It also houses the Water Department equipment.

The servicing of the animals and vehicles rested with the blacksmith and wheelwright. In the early days of the township the citizens engaged a blacksmith to come to the community to render his much needed services. He was sometimes called affectionately "smitty." In the 1800's many different men served as blacksmiths in this town. Survival was the rule and those capable and dependable finally established permanent stands. Usually it came to be that one shop would serve a town and sometimes the trade from outlying districts. In the last days of the blacksmith business in our surrounding towns, horse and oxen were brought from miles around, usually on trucks, to be shod. Morris Robbins came from Carver with his oxen to my father's shop. Today oxen are gone from the scene and horses are shod at home by the farrier who comes with his supply of shoes, his forge and anvil to take care of "Dobbins'" personal needs. No

longer do the boys and girls coming home from school peer in the open shop door to see the sparks that fly like chaff off the floor. The switch from the burning horse's hoof to the burning odor of gasoline was no improvement on the scale of pleasant fragrances. Young hands turned to cotterpins and shims and coils and sparkplugs with little trouble. The old village blacksmith seldom turned with enthusiasm to the new and strange vocational pursuits. Machinists were converted to auto mechanics and younger men turned to this new field. The change at our shop included automobile service and repair which brought in Bill Rountry as a mechanic. We had Ernest Sturtevant, another mechanic, who was the first professional chauffeur in our Town. He came into father's employ to begin the service that the townspeople began to need to keep the "Old Jallopy" running. I came home and an addition was built on the east side of the old building and all seemed well for "the Farmer's Garage" that would one day become J. B. Baker and Sons Auto Service. But I left to teach and neither of my two brothers chose this vocation. So the years brought a sort of peaceful tapering off of activity at the "Old Stand."

George Estes was associated with the bus service in Brockton at first and came to Halifax to begin operating his garage on Plymouth Street where Phil Broderick now operates his business. George Estes was the best trouble-shooter auto repairman I ever knew. Elvin Wood was also well qualified in this field, though he did not ply his trade here in Halifax. His rather short life was spent working in Brockton and later with the U-Drive It Co. of Boston. It was easy to pick out the men engaged in auto repair work. Among them were Henry Hammond, Sr., James Bouldry, Daniel Bosworth, Wallie Cunningham, Phil Broderick, David Merrill and now the new owners who run Bob's Garage and the very new business run by James Sturtevant. My neighbor, Henry Hammond, Jr. whom I face across Plymouth Street has been close to me all his life. He now operates a garage on Plymouth Street. On the night of his birth I was sent to fetch the nurse to attend his mother. His uncles and aunts were my boyhood playmates and I always called his grandfather and grandmother Uncle Amos and Aunt Maggie, although there was no legal relation between us. Henry was a life-long friend and neighbor for the last half of his life. He and I were honored with life membership in the Halifax Post of the American Legion. Mabel, the wife of Senior Henry and mother of Junior was the Welfare Agent in our Town for many years. A grandson, Frank, often takes me on excursions in the wrecker to bring in the remains of the havoc that results from man's haste to get somewhere too fast. Somehow, when riding in the wrecker with Frank piloting, I feel momentarily safe. Other drivers, seeing the physical evidence of a wreck behind us, avoid us and exercise due caution to prevent another accident like the one we are cleaning up. Daniel Bosworth had a Saab Agency for a time at the intersection of 58 and 106. He also operated the garage that his father had run at the intersection of 106 and Carver Street. David Merrill ran it for awhile and now the two "Bobs" operate it. They are Robert E. Castle and Robert H. Gauva. At one time the Ellis Auto Body Service was operated here. Now this company has moved to Old Plymouth Street near Furnace Street. In connection with auto services it is pleasant to report that John Duffy has just built a car wash next to the filling station in Kings Plaza. The late Ceasar Martin had a junkyard license and parts business just off Circuit Street. This area originally made up the

Donnelly Farm. When I was a boy the cellar hole was easily recognized and there was a cluster of lilac bushes that convince me that there was once an established home there.

In this fast-developing town each issue of the *Enterprise* seems to bring an announcement of a new place of business. In the spring of 1973 the Cumberland Farms Co. received approval of town authorities to establish a store and filling station complex at the northeast corner of the intersection of Routes 106 and 58. This backs up to the Charles Cook Bicycle Shop of my boyhood days. One aspect of the development of these sites that has come into the picture is the zoning regulations that control the types of activities that may be pursued in various sections of the town. These zones include areas where industry may be established and another where business may be conducted. The residential areas are spread out and, of course, one may have a dwelling in any one of the other listed zones if he so chooses and can get approval of the zoning board. One may not have an industrial activity in any zone other than the one designated for it and the same goes for business activities. Also one must realize that a considerable part of the town land is marked for conservation. The town began to zone itself in 1965. A few minor changes have been made in subsequent years and more are anticipated. In general, however, the adopted zoning laws will control our future land uses in Halifax. With a Planning Board to watch and guide in the developing uses of the land and a Board of Health to regulate those affairs that affect the general health of the public, plus inspectors that control the uses of public utilities, we seem to be in "the best place on earth!"



Monroe Chair —built by Benjamin Monroe of Halifax (1752-1824).

INDUSTRY

The early inhabitants of Halifax worked at raising crops and operating several mills in the area. The founding of the Samuel Sturtevant Mill, in effect, marked the beginning of industry in Halifax. Founded in 1728, the mill was located at what is now the corner of Old Plymouth and Furnace Streets, in a territory which at that time came under the jurisdiction of the Plympton Township. Deacon Samuel Sturtevant settled on the south side of the East Lake and was granted water privileges on Herring Brook running from Monponsett Pond to Robbins Pond. The cemetery located near his home opposite the old nursery site is the oldest cemetery in Halifax. Deacon Sturtevant and Joseph Sturtevant deeded this land for a cemetery on June 27, 1728 to a "lot of people." The deed was recorded in the Plymouth Registry of Deeds, Book 25, Page 78. This was done some six years before the town of Halifax was incorporated. A quote from an early paper adds to the story of this cemetery somewhat: "There is an open space on the easterly side where there are no gravestones. No one knows why it is there, but in this area there are supposed to be unmarked graves." In all references of which I am aware, this cemetery is known as the "East Cemetery."

The Sturtevant Mill complex on the Herring Brook and at the corner of Plymouth and Furnace Streets, as mentioned above, housed the traditional up-and-down board mill and, later, there were added a grist mill, a shingle mill and a soap factory. This important power-generating source, owned by many different interests through the years, produced lumber products continuously until about 1910. A favorite picture of the "Old Cotton Mill," that was built at this same location around 1800, appears on an accompanying page. Stories of the pre-Revolutionary foundry products cast here are fascinating. The later change to furnace operation came about quite naturally when iron ore deposits were discovered in Monponsett—mostly in the West Lake area and around Leach's Landing just offshore from the end of 11th Avenue. Also, in later years, shoe boxes manufactured here helped Brockton's shoemakers to send her famous "Shoe City of the World" products to the far corners of the earth, while giving the men of this community a source of income for many years. Today, the stream that once powered this thriving industrial complex is merely a sluggish trickle carrying away the overflow of Monponsett. The area was sparsely settled and few houses were built about here in the early years. The framework of the first dwellings was rough-hewn and only the covering material was processed or milled timber. Oak was a favorite wood for framing houses; white pine and



“Ye Olde Cotton Mill” — built about 1800. Located at the corner of Furnace and Old Plymouth Streets and last owned and operated by Henry M. and Daniel O. Bosworth.

cedar were used for weather covering and finish. Boards were sawed to their desired thickness with an up-and-down saw. On close examination, one of these old boards will show saw marks running at right angles to its long dimension. These saw-marks or bites extended only to the depth of the teeth of the saw—perhaps a quarter to three-eighths of an inch. This telltale up-and-down scar on a board tells of the long, tedious process in the building of the early colonial home—actually a once-in-a-lifetime task which kept our ancestors settled in one place. At any rate, in those days, they “raised” houses framed with oak and prized for toughness and durability. Oak’s commercial importance as a source of income was vital as well. It was a favorite of both shipbuilders and wheelwrights who manufactured most of the wagons and sleds of the early days. Cedar, too, earned its share of revenues.

Outside trade was greatly limited at first as travel was quite restricted. Much of our own lumber was sent to England and to the European market. The utilization of native products was important since the exchange of goods was difficult due to their cost and limited transportation. We did have the gift of the forests—likewise, almost all our early tools were wood. In my younger years, drags and wagons made of wood were common on the old farms and our few highways. My old friend, Mr. William Tillson, who dates well back into the 19th century, once allowed me to help in the turning and drilling of a wooden hub for use in the wooden wheel on a wooden axle of an old tip-cart. Shafts, whiffletrees, hounds, spreaders and wagon tongues for double hitches were almost exclusively made of wood. Buckets, barrels, tubs, even the delicate works of clocks, were wooden. Only special tools had metal parts to assure long-lasting, fine cutting edges. The Tomsons in their log cabin (which was the first home and farm in Halifax) used wooden tools. After some years they did keep hard goods. The first shovel with an iron-bound edge was introduced into the region by John Tomson. Mr. Soule, who lived some four miles away, borrowed it on occasion and one assumes it was “very special.” In the dawn of our metal era, the adoption of the English custom of using pewter for spoon-making was widespread. My own mold for pewter still awaits my first fling at casting my own eating utensils. The pioneers learned to utilize still another metal that came to their attention, namely iron. Ore was discovered in the lake bottom and in “Iron Ore Gulch,” off what is now Elm Street. Iron ore was also found up “Iron Ore Brook,” which emptied into Snake River or Herring Brook and entered near Stone Weir in what I now refer to as Stump Pond. In the story of iron, particularly the part which touches the little point of the compass that revolves around Halifax, mention must be made that there was a place in Halifax where surveyors could not properly do their measuring because of the disturbing influence of ore deposits.

Stirrings of the developing outside world found their way into Halifax and one suspects that ingenuity and resourcefulness were traits as common among our people as they were among the citizens of Saugus, Bridgewater, Pembroke or Carver, and so we took part in the iron age. Saugus had the first foundry and Carver got her ore out and made a hot enough forging fire to cast the very first iron teakettle made in America. Likewise, Halifax got equally aroused and fired up her furnaces—three at a time—to make at least one iron spider. I have one in my collection which, it is claimed, was molded and cast right here on Furnace



Sturtevant Cemetery on Plymouth Street, the town's oldest cemetery, dates from 1728 and comprises $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres. The donors were Samuel Sturtevant and Josiah Sturtevant.

Street. Lore has it that there was also iron ore for making cannon balls for the Revolutionary Army. If I could reconcile the two eras of the iron business and the cotton factory so they would coincide, it would afford me the opportunity to suggest that we had the market cornered—the cannon to shoot and make the big noise and the cotton nearby to stuff in our ears and block out the disturbing sounds. In any case, the foundries owed their operation to hot-air blast furnaces which permitted the treated iron ore to flow into molds to be cooled and finished into articles for marketing. Only charcoal, a product from processed wood, could be fired to a heat intense enough to melt the iron for pouring—and we had plenty of wood. In fact, for many generations after the closing of the foundry in Halifax, charcoal was still produced here for foundries elsewhere—even as far away as Taunton. At the Bicentennial in 1934, a pit was dug and burned on the grounds during the celebration, tended by Orville Cole and Austin Bourne. The town's historical collection has pictures of charcoal pits ready for firing. There is also an account of a catastrophe that saw the shanty house of a pit attendant burned while he was absent on a short trip for supplies. There is no conceivable way for a person to get dustier, dirtier and blacker than to be detailed to tend a burning charcoal pit. The pit arrangement was to frame an opening through the center of many cords of wood, built in a very blunt, truncated cone by standing the four foot lengths of wood on end and slightly tipped toward the center. The desired amount of purified "Coal"—really charred wood—needed, determined how many heights or layers of stacked wood one put on the pile. Thousands of baskets of charcoal left Halifax, passing by unnoticed usually in the wee hours of the morning on the way to market. The highways in those days were not the hard, noisy roadways of today, but rather the deep, rutted, sandy roads that prevailed up to about 1915.

The furnace in Halifax probably heated the iron that made the tub bricked into the chimney complex of our house on Plymouth Street. Surely, the tub that I now "show off" by suspending it on my own lawn in the summer came through the crucibles on Furnace Street. I still threaten to eat a meal prepared in the iron skillet which I proudly display whenever the opportunity arises. A theory that may deserve more attention is that the hardware on the "First Post Office Building," now being considered by the Historical Society for restoration, could well have come from metal poured in our very own foundry. The building dates definitely back to before the Centennial of the town and decidedly before the burning and termination of the three furnaces that comprised our industrial complex on Furnace Street. Even after the furnaces were destroyed, the water power harnessed for use by the foundry was still used to run the box manufacturing business that carried on until cranberry interests bought out the rights and began the draining of the swamps adjacent to the river system. It is this selfsame business that is now recognized as the largest industry of the county, and perhaps places Halifax in the center of the cranberry world. The A. C. Burrage Bogs and the above-mentioned Cape Cod Bogs make up the combine now known as the Ocean Spray Company with headquarters in Hanson and the main processing plant in Middleboro. The Wine Brook Bog, another cranberry enterprise, is wholly within Halifax boundaries and incidentally, is in the runoff system that both the Burrage Bog and Cape Cod Cranberry Bogs are tied into. This drainage from Monponsett Pond runs down the outlet through Stump Pond

and into Robbins Pond. Through the years this waterway has been called Snake River, Herring Brook and Stump Pond. Stone Weir, a mile or so downstream from Monponsett on this river, was known as "Governor's Crossing" at one time. The chief executive of the Massachusetts Bay Colony passed over this fording place en route to Plymouth, thus the name. Also, running into the stream near the Stone Weir is Iron Ore Brook. Nowadays the water is dammed at Stone Weir to raise the level of Monponsett and permit a reverse runoff to Silver Lake. A half-mile upstream from Elm Street one comes to the narrows. At the lower end is Bullfrog Creek and immediately upstream is the "dam." It was here that generations of neighborhood boys had their swimming hole.

It would indeed be negligent to let the water flow on forever through this paradise of serenity and leave out the chain of events that wove accompaniment, namely the antics of the young harum-scarums of our Town—near drownings and great raft exploits were by far the greatest thrill. This also included the fishing pole and line, dangling its bait to challenge the biggest hornpout, the longest eel, the sweetest pickerel that a boy could ever imagine. Nothing else ever counted; mosquitoes didn't bother and lines never got so entangled that they couldn't be straightened out with a couple of quick swishes. Boats leaked—it was easy to empty them though; just tip-er over and start another cruise. Canoes slid effortlessly from our blinds to retrieve ducks or geese that fell to the dead-eye aim of the gunner in the gunning stand. I recall that we cooked the bird with feathers intact. We couldn't stop to pick the thing and I don't remember how the "pickings" were once we did get it plucked and, of course, as I said, we cooked it.

At the very site of the old swimming hole, A. C. Burrage Co. made a cut into the river and began digging a canal that was to bypass much of Stump Pond and enter into Monponsett. The idea was to control and drain the pond bottom, making this area the biggest cranberry bog in the world. Unfortunately, the project was halted about halfway to its goal, which was the outlet of Monponsett, a half mile away. It was also near these "narrows" that I personally experienced an immersion which I cannot forget. At the risk of overworking the term narrow, the experience went as follows: One winter, skating full-tilt across the pond, I got my directions wrong and skated right into only skimmed-over water. Needless to say, I was submerged and came up under good thick ice. Good, that is, if one wished to use its upper side for skating; but far from good for exploration with heavy gear on, poor visibility and no air. My direction-finder worked, however, and I reversed my course precisely and emerged again exactly at the point of entrance. In ensuing years, I have never condemned those who play games of chance, for I know that sometimes one is sure to win and I know I had a winning ticket that time.

The cranberry bogs have drained much of the land in this part of the town and, accordingly, the heads of water that were so prominent at one time are now gone. After the water-powered mills came the steam mills which were followed by the gasoline-powered mills. The lumber business virtually ended in this town just before electricity-powered mills became popular. Much of the industrial activities in this town in the early years owed their survival to the Stump Pond waterhead. However, a back-up of a fairly good-sized head of water furnished the power for the Tomson Mill just off Thompson Street. The mill was also

near the original Tomson Cabin—only a few rods down the watershed and near the course to the Winnetuxet River that, in turn, empties into the Taunton River. My old friend A. Angus told of watching grain being ground at this mill and of the operation of the shingle-splitting machine. Some dim markings can still be seen on the site but they, in turn, have mostly faded away. One recalls the profuse carpeting of lily leaves that lay in tranquil fashion on this old pond's surface. They appeared like so many buttons or bows or knots like those tied to a quilt. The current that flowed under the road at Palmer Mill was dammed. It was here that I saw my first up-and-down saw. Many of the adults of my acquaintance and a few younger men that I knew worked here. Since my father was the local blacksmith and wheelwright, my relationship to the mill was often one of a serious nature. A part of the wheelwright trade meant "setting" tires. Likewise, as in this automotive age, the emphasis was on the frequently-recurring problem, namely keeping the chariot properly shod. Dry weather had the tendency to shrink the wooden wheel. Usually the condition would correct itself if you ran the wheels through water when watering your horse at brook turnouts or left the wagon out in the rain. However, at times, permanent repairs were needed and this involved setting the tires, which required removing the tire from its rim, shortening its overall circumference and replacing it on the wheel. It wasn't as simple a procedure as it sounds. One could not put the reduced tire back on the rim of the wheel without due preparation. First, a bonfire would be built; then the tire would be placed on the burning pile and heated to almost a red heat when the circumference of the tire would expand or lengthen and thus allow the heated tire to be dropped on the rim of the wheel. The major source of burning material for this procedure was "chats" from the millyard. The blacksmith's "boy" was generally sent to fetch the "chats" for this operation. I gained the status of teamster, the opportunity to make believe I was doing a man's work, the chance to be abroad with my rig and any incidentals that might accrue, such as the envious glances of the more junior members of my acquaintances. I got to be an old hand at this chore, not that any great ingenuity was required to get to a millyard and steer a safe course through great stacks of lumber. Thus, I often got to travel to Palmer Mill for a "load of chats."

I remember a wooden tub that stood at the corner of father's shop, directly under the end of a gutter that was supposed to feed a stream of water into the barrel during rain storms. The theory worked on occasion, I suspect, though during my apprenticeship there never seemed to be an ample supply of water for the cooling of the hot tire on the wheel. The auxiliary source of the precious water was a family well located at our residence some 100 yards away. One had to haul up the water, pour it into pails for transporting, and haul the twin cargoes to the shop for dumping into the cavernous barrel. It was also my responsibility to douse the fire once the tire was set upon the wheel. Once, when the barrel was full and father busy at the nearby forge with Peter, his helper at the nearby anvil engrossed in some task, a banging on the side wall of the shop in the vicinity of the barrel was heard. Father's curiosity plus his awareness that brother James was somewhere about prompted him to yell out "Stop the pounding!" The rumpus stopped. But Father stepped to the open door for a look and there, upside down with two short legs just showing above the rim of the barrel and with head and upper torso submerged, hung precariously, young

James. He was pulled out, held upside down, shaken vigorously and in Peter's arms was run up and down the street, after which he wound up empty. Dr. Charles was called in and everything turned out happily.

Streams were dammed up and mills built to run off the power generated by the falling water hitting paddles on waterwheels. On River Street, between Pratt and Thompson Streets, one crosses a stream. On its north side and downstream a short way, the ruins of the Porter Mill can be seen. Featured on the next page is a photograph of these ruins taken some years ago. A list of the assets and remaining equipment after its closing (also in my collection) gives a good idea of the kinds of machinery needed in a mill of its type and period.

Continuing east along River Street, we arrive at the former site of the Kay Angus Mill. It is located directly opposite the lot where the original Drew house stood. This house, of garrison structure, had a stockade nearby into which the townspeople could retreat in times of danger. The home was built facing south; since it was on the south side of the road, its back door opened onto the street. The Drew complex included a mill and a store which was the center of activity in that neighborhood. Mr. Drew bid several times and was awarded the contract to care for town paupers. Bonding was required and it was stipulated that, at the end of his year's contract, he would turn over his charges to his successor with clothing comparable to what had come with them. Food and lodging was guaranteed by the successful bidder and the town furnished medical care. Mr. Drew was also editor of a weekly paper that circulated through the town. It was released in long-hand with a checkoff sheet in order to get it to all subscribers. I own several copies, even more precious now, I dare say, than they were in those days when they were circulated. Mr. Drew took issue with the practices of the Church on occasion and absented himself from attending services for quite a while. Bargaining committees were not in vogue then, but many meetings with Mr. Drew are reported in Church records and it is pleasant to note that in later years he seemed to be included in all kinds of activities, both spiritual and non-sectarian, in this town and state. Drew was also a pioneer on the issue of "busing" pupils to desirable school districts. The children in the outlying areas lacked some of the privileges enjoyed by those nearer the center of town. There were five school districts, autonomous in every respect. A Prudential Committee was elected for every district which hired the teacher and assessed taxes for operating the school. Mr. Drew tried for a long time to have his children included in a district outside the one in which they lived but, to my knowledge, never succeeded. Shortly after his attempts at reforming the schools, central schools became popular, and our five schools became three and then one. Mr. Ira Sturtevant of this town was also a pioneer in the movement to consolidate public schools in the state.

In the last years of the 19th century, the Drew Mill came into the possession of Kay Angus. I went there often as a boy for "chats," and remember seeing for the last time in Halifax the operation known as making "cedar shingles." The Angus Mill had another accommodating feature. Periodically throughout this town, one could usually hear the whistle at Kay Angus' Mill. It was blown at seven in the morning, at noon and at five at night. One startling effect that should be reported is the scare that shot through a fellow's system if he happened to find himself sitting in the boiler room just as Bill Hollis, the fireman, pulled



Site of the Porter Mill on River Street west of the Firing Range.

the cord on the whistle. It never failed to take me out of my seat! Mr. Angus could tell the tallest tales about moose in his home country of Canada. He also played his violin at many house parties in the area. The discrepancy in our ages had two effects which I appreciated. The moose stories seemed all too real, and Mr. Angus' family consisted of two lovely daughters, a son and, of course, the pleasant and friendly Mrs. Angus. In back of the Angus Mill was a pond that appears on an old 1832 map. It covered almost thirty acres. Also in this vicinity stands the former home of my sister-in-law, Mrs. Olive (Minot) Baker.

In later years, a gasoline-powered mill was located very close to the edge of the swamp off South Street. Homer Tillson built this portable mill and acted as sawyer during its brief existence. While in the south part of the town and on Wood Street it comes to mind that on Raven Brook, which passes through the Great Cedar Swamp from Middleboro, there was a grist mill and later a lumber mill near the location where Raven crosses under Wood Street. Somewhat east of this point, some millstones were discovered some years ago. This raises the question about the exact location of the early mill in this section of the town. The early maps show a fording place where Wood Street crosses over Raven Brook, but I can't find evidence of stones or other telltale signs of a mill at this location. "The Deacon's Folly" is a story of a mill project in this area—but one that failed. It appears in a subsequent chapter. Also, the aforementioned Palmer Mill was situated on Monponsett Brook, which ran through Turkey Swamp and finally into the system of the Winnetuxet River. All of this drainage was on the south side of town. The other runoff of significance was the Stump Pond to Robbins Pond system, on which only one mill was located, on Furnace Street. The William Tillson Steam Mill on Elm Street never involved water power. The structure was impressive, however, and the high brick chimney stood for many years as an imposing landmark. In its final years of operation, its sawyer and general boss was William Wood. He and his wife lived in the last house on Pond Street next to the East Bridgewater line. Mrs. Wood was my mother's dress-maker and, as a boy, I can recall visiting Mrs. Wood with my mother when Mother would need "fittings." It was always an enjoyable trip since I got to play with the Wood's sons, Alton and Percy, and they had an extraordinarily large barn to romp in.

As my father was the village blacksmith and had little time for farming, I took it upon myself to work for various farmers doing lighter chores. I had flings working for half a dozen farms, in addition to working for the town—mowing bushes, spraying orchards, painting road signs and, of course, firefighting. This last activity I liked so well that, while I wouldn't wish harm to property-owners in the area, it would have broken up the uneventfulness of my life had there been a few more conflagrations. Father was the first chief of our fire department when it was organized on August 24, 1909. This institution consisted of twenty Badger fire extinguishers plus, of course, the volunteer firemen. They were partially filled (the extinguishers, that is) with soda water and inside was a rack that suspended a bottle of sulphuric acid near the top of the extinguisher. When inverted the acid would flow into the water-soda mixture and chemically react to create a high pressure that drove the fire deterrent out the short hose to a nozzle at the outer end of the flexible hose for steering the stream. Recharging the extinguishers often became my job. The



Palmer Mill on Palmer Mill Road, a lumber mill run by a head of water backed up in Turkey Swamp.

soda was measured out in small bags and a liberal supply of acid was always on hand. Once we had been warned of a fire, whether by the church bell or in later years by telephone or visible flames and smoke, we would load the extinguishers into the democrat wagon, harness up the horse and gallop full speed to the scene of the fire. If the distance was great, the horse was given some consideration. As a young boy, before the organization of our fire department, I remember seeing the millyard horse, "Old Tom," come running from the mill hitched to the yard wagon. Somewhere under the foot of the driver was a gong that made a fearful din. Only an artist aided by a sound effects expert could portray this outfit, pounding in the dust, driver standing and flailing his arms and sounding the gong. Refinement came with the first fire truck. It was a converted passenger car with the body entirely removed except for the front seat and a platform added at the rear. The old gongs have gone but sirens do stir to a certain degree everyone's "Timbers" as of yore. Mills in the days of water power were mostly free of fire. With the advent of steam and roaring boilers, however, the story soon changed. Halifax had had its share of fires. Perhaps the worst conflagration to take place in Halifax, changing the economic course of the town's history, came about when the boiler exploded at the Old Colony Railroad Hothouse and Nursery complex on Plymouth Street opposite the cemetery on East Lake. It was an important enterprise and a big loss to the town. The date of this loss was December 20, 1890.

When one studies the changes that come about in lifestyles and the kinds of work that keep people going, it becomes evident that the needs of others come to be a part of how people live and work. At first, we, in a country type of community, carried our products into the more populous centers. Lumber was a popular commodity as was iron ore. Tons of hay were also shipped from this town to meet the horse and cattle needs of towns with less or no means of growing feed. Vegetables were also a fine marketable item. As the nearby communities continued to grow and demand began to exceed the production capacities of their own fields, food products began to come from places like ours where land space enables us to grow huge crops. For a long time we were able to raise our own dairy products. Through 1960, and even now, there are dairy farms still producing milk. Nonetheless, the Gummows, Thompsons, Sturtevents, Burroughs, Simpsons, Bosworths and Haywards, with their herds of dairy cows that I knew as a boy, have all faded into memory along with windmills, cornfields, corn sheds, silos and milk cans.

The poultry business also faded away gradually, as had the dairy herds. Several chicken farmers, men from this town, were prominent in the breeding and growing of choice poultry stock. Incubators holding thousands of eggs replaced the old custom of setting a brooding hen with about a dozen eggs in any out-of-the-way place where she had to fend for herself. With the old method, a boy could "discover" a setting hen and, in due time (about twenty-one days) a flock of chicks would be hatched. Thereupon he had himself a commodity to sell to any interested party—which usually turned out to be his mother. The layers gave forth a continuing supply of eggs to be sold each week to the eggman. The cockrels went to the hen cart that came by to buy up surplus fowl. Eggs were a regular barter deal with the grocery man who arrived each week to "get his order" and on a repeat trip to make delivery. From the

Simpsons, Devitts, Blackmans, Bunkers, Tewksburys, Hardings, Lunn and Gassetts, to the Sturtevant's "Sturdy Chickens" and those with smaller flocks such as the Rigos, Watsons and Edwards, came a great input of energy resulting in an impressive income from a flourishing chicken business. Inevitably, the economic pendulum swung so that it became unprofitable for the farmers in our area to stay in the hen business and only the Sturtevant's farm is in operation today. At any rate, the days of agricultural pursuits seem virtually ended for this region. Profits have dwindled, black turned to red in the business ledger and, except for service-type businesses and food suppliers, only the cranberry interests are of any significance.

What is now Gentile's Supermarket was opened around 1915. King's is the major retail outlet in our town. Our central marketing place dates from the days of the General Store on the top of the hill opposite the Town Hall, where the Packards followed the Pooles, who were located on the Town Hall side and to the south a bit. Then came Frank Lyon who operated the Old Packard Store until G. A. Estes took over and moved it to the foot of the hill and built his new store that is now an apartment building next to the library. Albion Estes, son of G. A., ran the new store until 1920. Anson Anderson ran it next until Harry Minor bought him out. Then, in turn, came Rufus Case and, the last to use this place of business was Alex King. Later King moved his business east to the new supermarket on Plymouth Street. The fire station and police headquarters followed this migration to our business center. In the complex called "King's Plaza" is located a dry-cleaning business, a laundromat, a drugstore, a barber shop, a hairdressing salon and some office space. On one side of the plaza stands our first bank, the branch office of the Rockland Trust Company. Balancing off the complex we find at the extreme east corner Jack Duffy's car wash. At one time, the center of the town's business was on the corner of Elm and Furnace Streets, in the home of Thomas Croade. Here, the early town meetings were held and, also, the Inglees later ran the General Store, supplying the entire town. Nat Perkins ran this place for a short time in my youth, and he was followed by Frank Lyon who was last to operate there.

The town schoolhouse, built about 1792, was situated on the west side of Elm Street and just beyond the above-mentioned Inglees Store. Owing to a change in climatic conditions or to someone's poor planning, the schoolhouse had to be moved across the street and a bit to the south because it was too cold. Still too windy and cold, it was moved south again, along Elm Street around the corner. This time, the shelter of the prominent sand bank protected it from the elements. The "Moving Schoolhouse" did cut down on the distance I had to travel to get home from school. "Moving Schools" were not unusual in those days. The teacher with her pupils would move classes to a different home each term if there were no permanent structure. The Historical Society is contemplating moving this, our most movable school, once again so that we can display it and proclaim it as the "Movingest Schoolhouse That Ever Was!"

A company store on Furnace Street, a part of the great factory complex for a short time, was destroyed in a great fire on July 5, 1848. Many years later, there was also a store in the J. B. Baker Farmers' Garage.

Leaving King's Plaza and proceeding east along Plymouth Street, one reaches the site of Halifax's one and only animal farm. It was operated from about



King's Supermarket and Shopping Center, established 1956, is located on Plymouth Street, east of the present Fire Station.

1950-1960 by Mr. Charles Chase. The entrance passed between Soule's Rest and the Richmond Place. A half-mile back a sizable layout of housing facilities, cages and service buildings were located. Mr. Chase was an established authority in this field and his activities captured interest hereabouts for some time. Opposite on Plymouth Street, the Farm House Gift Shop prospered for a short time. Its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Harrison, eventually converted the building into apartments. This same building served as the parsonage for the Congregational Church in my youth. Sometimes, "Husking Bees" were held here. The gainful aspect of such an affair was to gather recently harvested corn, separate it from the bulky stalks, and ready it for shelling. At a husking bee it was best to have an escort first, preferably a partner of the opposite sex. The party was much more enjoyable if the lights were low. The main concern of young huskers was to keep a sharp eye out for colored ears of corn, any color except the natural yellow hue. The person who made this lucky discovery was told to "Kiss her!" When colored corn seemed to be in short supply, someone would usually come through with a stock of the valued ears, adding some spice to the night's fun. I could always manage to stash one ear of colored corn on my person and bring it forth at proper intervals. It was at a husking bee that I first met the girl who later became Mrs. Guy Baker.

Across the street from the old parsonage stands the home of the late Doris Hoinghaus, our able town clerk and worker for the Historical Society. Her accidental death, December 27, 1963, caused grief to all. At the rear of her home sat the tumble-down ruins of the first Post Office. It was moved to this location when the original church building was moved in 1852. It is hoped that this Post Office can be restored and placed in a town-owned lot facing South Street which takes in most of the land to the rear of the Holmes Public Library. The first regular school-teacher, Jonathan Sears, lived in the house next to the Hoinghaus home. This same house served as a boarding house for other school-teachers through the years. Mrs. Jewett, the boarding-house mistress, was a personal friend of mine. She was both counselor and disciplinarian to the young women teachers in her charge. Of course, I courted favors here, and Mrs. J. sort of tolerated me. We all took good care of Mrs. Jewett, seeking her favor by performing all the little chores only a man can do. Down the lane a bit behind Mrs. Jewett's barn stood the Woodcroft Farm. The name is not entirely descriptive of what went on here as it was mostly concerned with horticulture and floriculture. An old cape cod house, badly in need of repair, stood there as a front building which served as the storehouse for boxes and pots. The greenhouse was quite large and the water reservoir was located in the center of the complex, making an attractive surface for the reflections of the windmill and the brick stack that came up through the center of the boiler room. It was certainly one of the show places of Halifax when I was young. The old house was the Deacon Waterman home and was probably one of the first in town. The Deacon was a founding father, and some early town meetings were held under his roof, as were some early church conclaves. The Woodcroft Farm eventually went by the board and a lovely home was built on the property by Edward Ramseyer. It was understood that this palatial structure was to be the permanent residence of the Ramseyers who had enjoyed the delights of East Lake on Paradise Lane. The move to the Woodcroft Farm site was made after



Halifax Country Club occupies the land that was once the Woodcroft Farm.

this big new home was finished. Not long afterwards, however, the place was sold to Ralph Atwood, a lawyer and farmer. Mr. Atwood was town assessor for many years. Mrs. Atwood, his wife, was the Halifax Librarian from 1952 to 1956. She then took a post as librarian at Falmouth where she served for many years until her recent retirement. This big and fairly new house down the lane was acquired by Lawrence Henrich and, after much renovation, was transformed into what is now the clubhouse of the Halifax Country Club. Traveling along Plymouth Street, one now encounters the newest place of business in Halifax—Jim Sturtevant's auto repair shop built in 1974. Of course, everyone knows of the activities on the opposite side of our Main Street—the "Sturdy Sturtevant Chick" enterprise now under new management.

Back on the south side of the street and at the corner of Monponsett and Plymouth Streets stands the Hayward Liquor Store. This business was opened by the late Ralph Hayward. He bought the property from the Hatfield family who had operated a grocery store there for many years. Opposite is the now familiar Nessralla vegetable, flower and plant stand. It was near this location that our first schoolhouse, known as Schoolhouse No. 1, was located. It was later moved to the foot of Meeting House Hill and became our first Fire Station. Originally, Stafford Sturtevant gave the town the plot of land on which this schoolhouse was built. Across the highway at the intersection of Routes 106 and 58, the Stafford Sturtevant farm stood. Reportedly one of the richest men in Plymouth County, in 1815 Sturtevant built "Pope's Tavern" located opposite

the Congregational Church. This building is now the home of Mrs. Violet Brown. Built in 1825, it was Sturtevant's wedding present to his daughter. As mentioned before, Mr. Sturtevant's granddaughter, Mrs. Frances A. Humphrey, was the author of our one and only novel, *The Children of Parks Tavern*, published in 1866.

Shortly before the turn of the century, the Stafford Sturtevant farm was acquired by Van Buren Grover. In 1898, Mr. Grover acted as host to a group of farmers from around town and the late Elroy Thompson claimed in his history of the area that it was the first organized Farmer's Club in America. This corner had always been empty save for the schoolhouse, and formed a large front to the Charles Cook home and the Bicycle Repair Shop which Mr. Cook operated for many years. As one continues east along Plymouth Street, he comes to an area just before the town cemetery where the Old Colony Railroad Nursery was located. The business was conducted on both sides of the street and even to this day one can see traces of the many kinds of bushes and plants that were cultivated here. The East Cemetery is next, the origins of which we have already discussed. The land opposite the East Cemetery is the town-owned Richmond Park. This gift to the town came from the Richmond heirs. Mrs. Richmond was a Parker and the superintendent of the nursery was also a Parker. On November 30, 1868 the Richmonds gave this tract to the town of Halifax. At this time, "the town voted to put a fence on the North and West sides of the East Cemetery." For some unknown reason, the deed to the park was not recorded but the transaction was finalized on June 28, 1908. Behind this recreational area the town water wells are located. Further along the street, at the intersection of Holmes and Plymouth Streets, we arrive at the spot where it is said the first white man spent some time within the town's limits. Mrs. Iola Taft related to me the story of her own father showing her the spot where John Sturtevant was supposed to have lived. The remains of a rustic foundation were still visible to her at that time. This early visitor to the shores of the pond was an obscure figure and his final resting place is not known.

A schoolhouse is indicated on the early maps quite close to the intersection of Plymouth and Holmes Streets. From this point along the "Old Plymouth Road" to Plymouth only two houses were situated before reaching the Plympton line. First came the Sylvester house which has lost some of its "old cape" look. There is still some record of old Mr. Sylvester's activities, however. It seems that Mr. Sylvester was the singing master and later choir master of the Congregational Church. For many years, Deacon Waterman had set the tunes at church, whereupon Deacon Sturtevant would take over. When Sylvester became singing master, Deacon Waterman resented his new style and refused to stay in the church during his conducting of the choir and congregation singing. While Sylvester and Waterman both resided in the same part of town, they were obviously far apart in their choices of vocal salutations to the Lord on Sundays. A daughter of Mr. Sylvester became a singing teacher. A charming lady of some ninety years, Mrs. Merton, who now resides in Kingston, related to me her experiences as a student of Sylvester's singing school conducted by a descendant of the earlier Sylvester family. She told of the long ride by horse and carriage, the pleasant association with other young people and the lifelong friendships that developed among the folk at the singing school.

The second and last house on this, the "Old Bridgewater Road," as I like to call it, is the place built by Mr. Soule. At the Bicentennial, it was declared the oldest house standing in the entire town. The two noble trees that shade the home have been landmarks for many years and the witch-cross paneling on the inside woodwork of this house is a special treat to visitors.

Until recent years a small beach on Holmes Street, just off Plymouth Street, was the town's only public bathing place. Today there are other designated landings open to the public, but except for the town beach on Lingan Street, none are used very often. The private beach on Annawon Drive is restricted to members of a local group, as is the beach at the end of 11th Avenue.

After crossing the inlet to East Lake, one reaches the confluence of the shore and Holmes Street. It was here that the soap factory owned by the Holmes family was located. This business was well-established and supplied many well-known products throughout the country. Mr. Nathaniel Holmes lived in the time of my youth and, on my trips to the freight office for supplies, I would enjoy two repeating incidents. Mr. Holmes would invariably treat me to some russet apples and I would drive the horse into the lake for a short distance to permit her to "tank up." Besides quenching the horse's thirst, this practice would wet the wooden wheels, causing them to swell and tighten, eliminating the need for replacing dried-out spokes and rattling felloes. Of course, it was only a temporary measure and eventually the wheelwright would have to "set" the tires—a procedure I have already described. Continuing along Holmes, it must be noted that the next item mentioned, though failing to qualify as a business enterprise, still provided a commodity of sorts—peaches. A Mr. Fred Krause lived in a very old and distinguished-looking house. He was classified by my generation as a hermit or recluse. He was an accomplished pianist and whenever a contingent of young people found themselves in his neighborhood they would pay him a visit and he'd play the piano for his visitors. All this was a cultural gain for us and I'm sure more than helped Mr. K. pass his time away. There was a particular time of year when we would find ourselves more often in his area—during the peach season. After paying our respects to Mr. Krause, we would, head for his orchards (of which we knew the exact layout) and, unbeknown to him, help ourselves to his peaches. We never stole his watermelons simply because we could purloin this item at other more convenient places. Really, one needed an almanac to keep track of our seasonal activities, most of which were carried out at night. Strawberries got the season started and gave us a chance to warm up, then came the season for peaches and, finally, we would round out the long summer-growing months in our neighbor's melon patches. The only way the barren winter, as compared to the lush summer season, can be made endurable is by preserving all your favorites to be relished on cold winter evenings. Preserving is an art. Take apples, for example. Just get the essence, the juice from the apples, and you have cider. Sweet cider comes first and a little of that to be shared with the distaff side is sociable. Stored in a barrel and with patience it will become "hard cider." I have struggled for a long time over this term and conclude that it's called "hard" because it's a hard job to wait for it to ferment enough to make it hard to resist. Sauerkraut was another interesting favorite. To make it you first have to raise the cabbages. Then, make a cutter just like your father's father made before him and cut the cabbages up into a barrel.

Keep lots of freshly-washed, young feet tramping the sauerkraut down firmly. Once the barrel is filled, top it off with a tight-fitting inside cover and place a heavy stone on top. After a few weeks the fermented juice will condition the cut-up cabbages so that, by simply opening the cellar door, you can smell the aroma. Mother used to embellish this delight by boiling hunks of salt pork with the kraut. Once a steaming kettle of the mixture landed on the table, there was no disposal problem.

At the time of this writing, I am waiting for the fresh herring to arrive in our streams. I'll eat them no matter what and there is another item that may be of value to future generations who want to augment their food supplies—apple pie. Apples must be pared, then sliced to wafer-thin thickness and hung up to dry by threading. The string ends must be fixed to both walls of the kitchen and placed high enough to avoid the reach of impatient young eaters. Mrs. Nymphus Marston, an octogenarian living on Elm Street and long since finished with the raising of her own boys, didn't suspect her own grandson and his buddies of grabbing slices of apples on occasion when we could invent an excuse to get to the "Fruit Corner." They were sliced. We didn't have potato chips. Even now I'll choose the dried, sliced apples!

Traveling along Holmes Street brings us to the site of an early schoolhouse. It was the only schoolhouse in Halifax ever to suffer an act of sabotage. Here are the salient facts of the attempt to remove this house of learning. There had been great issue on the part of town residents as to where the schoolhouse was to be located. The decision was finally rendered and the school built. It was not a unanimous decision, however, and the short life of the school was filled with trials and tribulations. It culminated in some disgruntled parties attempting to burn it down. The attempt failed but an individual who stole the stovepipe and stove was apprehended. When we say apprehended, we don't mean convicted, because no witnesses could be found to make the charge stick. The stove and stovepipe were mysteriously returned to the school. Shortly afterwards, the faction opposed to this schoolhouse built a new one near the corner of Holmes and Plymouth Streets.

As one approaches the railroad crossing in this same vicinity, there is, to the west side of Holmes Street, a driveway into the Halifax Garden Company. This enterprise was founded and syndicated in September of 1905. In its early years, much outdoor growing was done. As recorded earlier, it is now one of our most prosperous businesses.

The railroad was run through Halifax in 1845 and, at the same time, the Old Colony Nursery was established. It was here that the stock was raised for the entire landscaping of the Old Colony Railroad Line. The nursery burned down in 1890. Edmund Churchill was employed by the nursery, as was Mrs. T. D. Morton, whose daughter tells us that the hired personnel were driven to the railroad station every week to collect their pay from the paymaster who travelled the length of the line in the paymaster's car. In an official document of the Town of Halifax is the report of the losses appraised by the insurance company when settlement was made following the fire that consumed the nursery hothouse. At the crossing stood the R. R. Station where the C. P. Washburn Lumber business is now located.

Beyond the crossing, and on the west side of the street, is a very old house

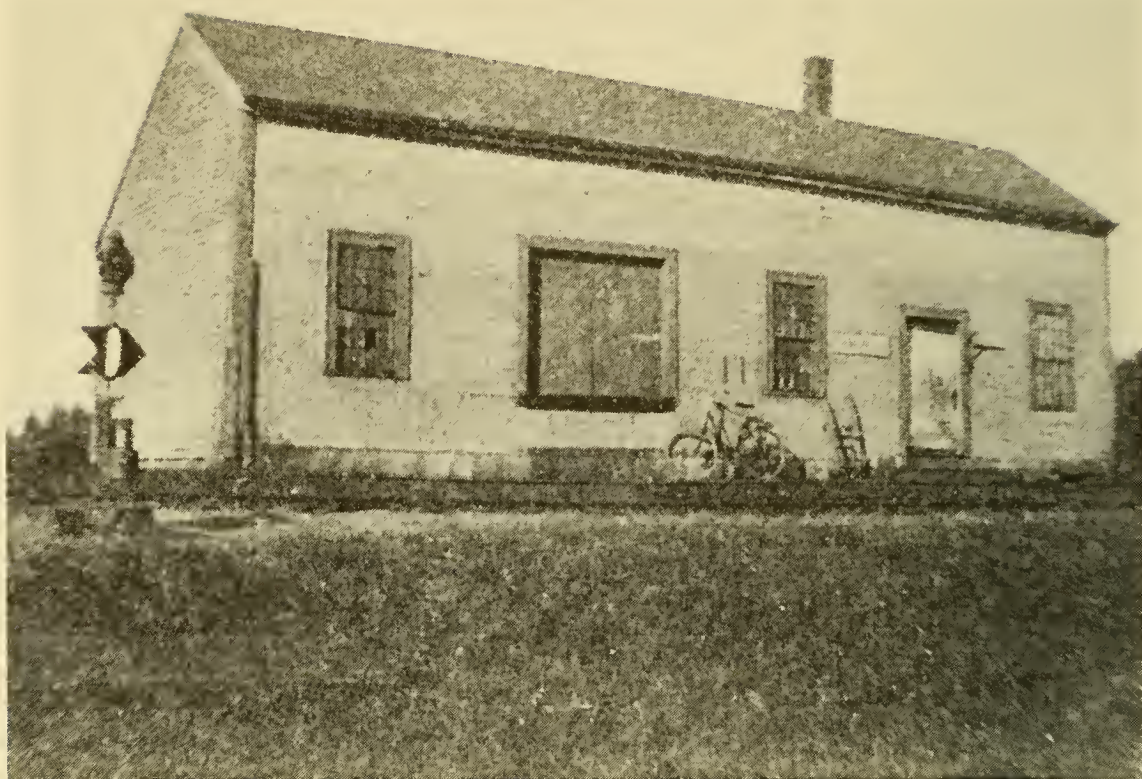
occupied by C. R. Winchester. It was once the C. White place. The building's close proximity to the road reminds us of a custom in the early days of building dwellings as close to the road as possible to avoid the tedious work of shoveling out in winter. Further along the road on the right side is the VFW building. Just across the Halifax line and on the same side is the drive into the Silver Lake Pumping Station, located on Halifax land. Also located here is a new six-million-dollar filtering plant built to clear Silver Lake water for Brockton's use. The small sub-station at the head of the East Monponsett Lake on Holmes Street has been operating for only a few years. This building contains the controls of the overflow pipeline that runs backward and takes surplus water from the lakes back to Silver Lake when the water level of the two Monponsett Lakes is in excess of fifty-six feet above sea level. Oak Street crosses Holmes Street running from the Plympton line to the Hanson line and, in general, forms the Halifax boundary line running from Silver Lake Pond (Jones River Pond) to the Stetson pond area. In the past, there has been little activity on the section of this road that runs to the east except that it has served as an access roadway for entering paths to the shores of Silver Lake. The rolling hills that make up the topography on both sides of Oak Street were the best source of mayflowers in this town. Now, however, this tract of land is going into the development called "Silver Lake Shores." Traveling along Oak to the west of Holmes Street we come to a road leading south and ending at a small body of water, called Muddy Pond, as shown on the 1879 map. Today, this same lake is called Crystal Lake. It's still a mystery as to who changed the name from Muddy or better still who named it "Muddy Pond" in the first place! It's a fine, clear body of water and deserves the name "Crystal."

Continuing along Oak Street in a northerly direction to Stetson Pond in Pembroke, we come to where stood a lone pine, supposedly marking the boundary of the John Tomson land, a 6,000 acre tract that he bargained for with the Indians. A Pembroke historian friend of mine who passed away in 1920 had a small box made of wood from this pine which I call the "Stetson Pine Box." This box is one of my prize possessions.

Back again to the trunk line of Halifax—Plymouth Street—we can continue back en route to the center of town. Just west of the East Cemetery is a way called Paradise Lane. Several summer homes dating back to about 1875 formed a little colony bordering on the lake. Paul DeSilva arrived here to vacation with his family and frequently used the services of my father's blacksmith shop. Paul built iceboats in the summer and in the winter enjoyed iceboating on the lakes. He was a perfectionist and always worked to improve his craft, much of which depended on iron work. He was a special customer who generally arrived on weekends and often took Saturday night supper with the Baker family. He owned the first motorcycle Halifax ever saw. He rode it across the United States and could tell hair-raising tales of adventures he had in the days long before motels were even thought of. I accompanied him on his trial runs on his iceboats many times. Retreating back in the direction of the center of town, the next exit off Plymouth is Monponsett Street. Proceeding towards the pond on this Monponsett Street, one travels on the roadway that was made after some years of petitioning. In my collection of papers pertaining to the construction of this road are four or five testimonials supporting or objecting to



Silver Lake Pumping Station in Halifax on Silver Lake. It serves as the primary water source for Brockton and is a supplementary water source for several nearby towns.



The Halifax Railroad Station, built in 1845, stood near the crossing on Holmes Street, near the present site of the C. P. Washburn Lumber Co.



Monponsett Station.

its acceptance. The White family, who lived in a house on the corner of Ocean Avenue and what later became Monponsett Street, had to travel all the way around the East Lake to get to town. Church attendance was compulsory in those days and the trip was always a long and arduous one for the Whites, particularly in bad weather. A solution to the problem was finally worked out after much experimentation. A ferry system worked for a time. And several bridges were proposed. In 1859, the fill was made and a bridge constructed to permit the flow of water to West Lake from East Lake. Mr. Isaac Sturtevant worked on this project as a young man and his daughter, Mrs. Taft, told me of his having worked on this job. I knew Mr. Sturtevant. He died in 1907. The bridge, of course, joined White's Island to the mainland. At one time White's Island was a retreat of the Indians, for Chief Wamsutta and his braves in particular. The road and the bridge closed up the water gap into which Major Church once flushed 120 Indians he had surprised as he approached from the side where the Monponsett Inn now stands. The Indians had no way of escape and had to surrender to a force waiting on the shore where, two centuries later, A. R. Parker built his ice cream stand. Here Toto's Restaurant once served patrons and now is graced by a lovely residence owned by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred V. DesRosiers. The island has been fully built up with homes and a stone has been placed to mark the meeting of the colonists with Wamsutta, the son of Massasoit. The park and beach—just beyond the marker and opposite it—is called Wamsutta. This beach is a private project which we hope will someday become a public facility.

Continuing along past Wamsutta Beach, one arrives at the present "Monponsett." In 1890 Mr. M. Schindler built a hotel here to accommodate patrons, mostly from Boston. Rail service came to Whitman, less frequently to Hanson and Halifax. These stations were used by vacationers and, of course, people came from surrounding communities by horse and carriage to the hotel. Many sportsmen from the Brockton area would use the trolley system that came into the district in South Hanson and Bryantville. Ice-fishing was quite popular. Mr. Charles Cook, the bicycle repairman referred to previously, was the man in charge of the Hotel Gunning Stand. He fixed my bike but never took me to the gunning stand. Maturity, steadiness and experience were required for success in this company of sportsmen and it has been rumored that aptitude with a deck of cards came in handy. And, of course, up to that time I had not developed much experience in these areas. Mr. Schindler lost the hotel by fire in 1895, and it was rebuilt that same year. I have an interesting picture of the hotel and its reflection in the water in my own collection. It's difficult to tell from its reflection which is the actual hotel. After the passing of Mr. Schindler, his son Robert and his wife Molly took over the operation of the hotel. Its popularity grew as did the practice of building small cottages around the lakes. The railroad even established a Monponsett Station in 1911. It was strictly to accommodate Boston traffic to the lake shores and hotel. I can recall watching people board these trains to return to the city on a Sunday night. Usually there would be enough people to fill five or six day coaches. Our sympathies went with those who had to travel in torrid cars back to a sweltering city. Air conditioning was, of course, unheard of in those days. But the invigorating Halifax air absorbed for a couple of days would do much to sustain the poor creatures until they could return in another week's time.



Monponsett Hotel, built in 1895. It was the second building on this site and it burned down in 1961.



Monponsett Inn. Built in 1961, it was officially opened on July 24, 1963.

The automobile opened wide the avenues to outlying localities where folk from the congested urban areas could refresh and rest themselves. When the auto did finally arrive people began to seek out what had, until then, been forbidden places and Halifax took a more prominent place on the map. The trend to move to the country is still popular, though it's more and more difficult to find property for sale hereabouts. The tactic of stacking people in condominiums is now gaining favor. Now, instead of spreading out, we are going up, so watch us grow tall. In any case, on with the story of our one and only public hostelry. After being rebuilt, the hotel prospered for many years. It housed a pool table for indoor amusement as well as a bowling alley. Boating was also popular. The boathouse was located on the opposite side of the street from the hotel. Bathing wasn't the universal pastime it is today, so beaches were used more for paddling. Beyond the semi-immersion one got from the washtub planted in front of the kitchen stove, it was the "Old Swimming Hole" and an occasional dip under cover of darkness that contented us. On the west side of Monponsett Street, family units built their camps or cottages. Today a house lot on the "Lakes" is out of the question. The deepest part of either lake is located to the extreme west on the lake off Milford Street. There is a public landing here at the end of Milford Street which lies directly in the path of the dividing line between Halifax and Hanson. While the Monponsett Station was on the Hanson side and the Monponsett Post Office was also in Hanson, this area is coveted by Halifax, too. The Post Office, the first in this area of Monponsett, was originally operated by Bert Marshall and was exactly opposite the Monponsett Railroad Station. Mrs. Marshall was the telephone operator at the Bryantville exchange for many years.



A group of strollers on the bridge between Monponsett Lakes. The roadway and bridge were built in 1845.

Heading home now we will glance at both sides of the Monponsett Lake and take note of previous omissions. At the end of Milford Street, at the water's edge if one looks out to the outlet of Monponsett Pond, one can see the beginning of a course some twenty-four miles long that ends in Narragansett Bay. And as one goes along with eyes still to the right, one sees where John Uston built and managed our Monponsett Movie House for many years. The Clam House, a concession adjacent to the movie theater, was operated for some time by Al and Rose Centrella and later by Elena Gentile Cimorelli.

Still on Monponsett Street heading toward Plymouth Street, we pass the Gentile's Lakeview Manor. This once housed a restaurant and at one time Benjamin Cianfarani used it as an auction hall. Across the street is the local Catholic Church and opposite it is the Rectory. Originally, this Rectory was a home built by the son-in-law of Mr. Schindler, owner of the first Monponsett Hotel. Continuing along Monponsett Street and through the "Narrows" one comes upon the the establishment of Mr. Paul Sturtevant. His heating oil business represents one of the major service setups in the town. Clark and Wilson, the other heating oil suppliers, were located on Carver Street where Millage Corkum Transportation Company now makes its headquarters. To skip about a bit, the ice cream stand located on this same Carver Street was founded by my late and dear friend George W. Estes. This area is not new to business ventures. Nearby was once located the Bosworth Ordinary, between the Central School and where Broderick's equipment business is located. Russ Bonney and his wife Linda built a store opposite the site of the old Martin Bosworth Tavern or "Ordinary" as it



Grove at West Lake, Monponsett, 1910, near Standish Manor. Grove bridal paths and roads leading to the lake were laid out across many rustic bridges.



Halifax Garden Company opposite former site of Railroad Station on Holmes Street. Greenhouses, hundreds of feet long, house hybrid roses which are shipped throughout the world.

was called. This store was established in 1915; it burned down in 1920 and was never rebuilt. Its location was at the exact spot where the new Post Office is now located. Just opposite here once sat a woolen warehouse. (Since I enjoyed this leap of some miles to Carver Street, I choose to jump back again to Monponsett Street.)

The Van Buren Grover farm on Monponsett Street, which included all the land that until lately was the Henry Kunkel place, was a showplace and a well-operated enterprise. Mr. Grover came to Halifax from Rockland where he had worked in a shoe factory. He was prominent in the founding of the Halifax Farmers Club. The Grover farm buildings were all destroyed by fire on the first day of the first month of the first year of the 20th century. Later, in my teen years, a family named Tyler ran the farm and raised special canteloupes for seed for the Breed Seed Co. of Boston. Since the fruit was raised only for seed, we young fellows were generously supplied with the edible insides of the melons after which the seeds would be collected.

There is some evidence that, in 1867, Ephraim Stetson began to cultivate cranberries in Halifax. In a cove above the "Narrows," up Stump Pond way, a narrow out-cropping of berries led Mr. Stetson to begin training cranberry vines to run; then, he pruned them in a manner to permit easier harvesting. Small pieces of bogs soon sprang into existence where moist land could be drained and the turf bottom prepared to carry a medium thickness of sand. Our swamp areas lent themselves to this "building"—a reference to the bog construction. There was a small piece of bog in front of Thomas Harlow's house on Thompson Street near Summit Street. As a boy I joined the ambitious folk about our neighborhood and lent a hand to aid Mr. Harlow in harvesting his crop of berries. He paid ten cents for each six-quart measure of berries. I only remember picking one day, however, and do not recall showing up for a repeat performance. Hand picking has since passed to snap machine picking, then to scooping and nowadays to the "Floating Method." Edwin Hayward built a bog on Hayward Street. Lester Bourne constructed another on Thompson Street. (Incidentally, and by contrast, Mr. Hayward's son Edwin reports that on their farm they sometimes raised cabbages that weighed as much as twenty pounds—how much would a cranberry weigh?)

The big bog movement into cranberry production came when the United Cape Cod Cranberry Co. was organized in 1904 and Marcus Urann began selling shares in the newly-formed company. The A. C. Burrage Cranberry Co. was founded in 1905. It was also the date of the founding of the Halifax Garden Co., also organized by A. C. Burrage. Henry S. Damon was appointed first general manager of the Garden Co. The initial plan was to build large greenhouses and do some outdoor growing. The north walls of the greenhouses were boarded up while the other three sides and the roof were glassed in. The supporting timbers were Florida Gulf Cypress. Ten miles of 1¼-inch pipe was installed for heating the entire plant. The glass covering the eight houses totalled 100,000 square feet. At first, five houses were used for lettuce and cucumber growing. The remaining three houses were used to grow English violets. Five houses were 40 by 300 feet and three were 300 by 23 feet. Beds were seventeen feet long and the walks between the beds measured two feet in width. The bottoms of the beds were covered with three inches of clay with

porous drain pipes embedded. A covering of fifteen inches of compost lay over the clay bottom. The capacity of one of the large houses approaches 24,000 lettuce plants with three crops per year. Acres were set aside out of doors for the exclusive growing of celery. The company bought 300 acres of land near the Halifax Depot for the greenhouses. To this day, the Burrage family still controls the property, although only roses and carnations are grown. In 1969 the superintendent of the company estimated that the market value of an acre of roses was \$244,000. At that time there were twenty-nine full-time employees of the Halifax Garden Co. and the payroll approached \$200,000. Taxes in this same 1969 came to \$13,000 and the company used 141,960 gallons of water per year, at a cost of approximately \$3,000. The average yearly oil consumption was around 450,000 gallons. For many years snakes were used to control pests in rose growing. Happily, the use of insecticides ended the usefulness of snakes. The climate here is ideal for roses with plenty of sunlight and air. In the twenty years that Jack Duffy, their superintendent of the company, worked for the Burrages, the bins in which the roses grew were not emptied. The A. C. Burrage Co. was also the developer of the Burrage Bogs off the pond side of Elm Street, extending beyond to the Hanson Line. Actually the great Hanson Cedar Swamp fringes the entire bog layout. The Wine Brook Bog is another layout located on the west side of Monponsett Lake. The Boy Scout Camp at Orchard Point is in this same general area. "Wine Brook" can be seen from across West Lake on its west shore. The origin of its name was from the color of the water that flows out of the brook that drains the swamp land near the pond. The wine color comes from the many red cedars that grow in the cedar swamp. Several other pieces of bogs can be found here and there throughout Halifax. The upkeep on small patches is, however, becoming too expensive and they are fast becoming lost to the encroaching forest land. Their scars will be with us for a long time, though, since the ditches will be slow to level off. The Bourne family had a bog off Thompson Street which was later owned by a Braddock of Carver and then by Clyde Bosworth. The Cumberland Farm Company has bought up this land and Russell Sturtevant has built a few acres of bog just east of the "Old Indian Trail."

General farming and dairy farming were the major sources of income for Halifax farmers when I was young. The farms were large enough to afford pasturing in good weather and to raise fodder crops for feed to be used during our rugged winter months. As I swing a circle in my mind from the lakes to Elm Street, I recall the cows at Brad Waterman's place and, in later years, at George Sturtevant's, George Hayward's, Irving Minott's, Jabe Thompson's and, into my own neighborhood, Dan Bosworth's and the Gummow's, and "way back," at Martin Howland's. Finally "way up" on Hudson Street I recall Fred Simpson and his cows. My own family had a couple of horses and one cow, a small flock of hens, pigs and now and then a dog. We were not farmers. However, it was a rich life for me playing in the shop and mixing with the townspeople as they came for blacksmith services. Soon I grew to do light work on the wagon wheels and clinch the shoes on horses' feet after the shoer had nailed them on. In time I grew to do all the common types of work in the shop, though never, ever, did I actually nail on a horseshoe in those apprentice years. Only the master of the



Cranberry harvesting on a Halifax bog.



trade, the blacksmith, ever nailed on shoes. Cutting and clinching nails and pulling off the old shoes was my job, only, of course, in reverse order.

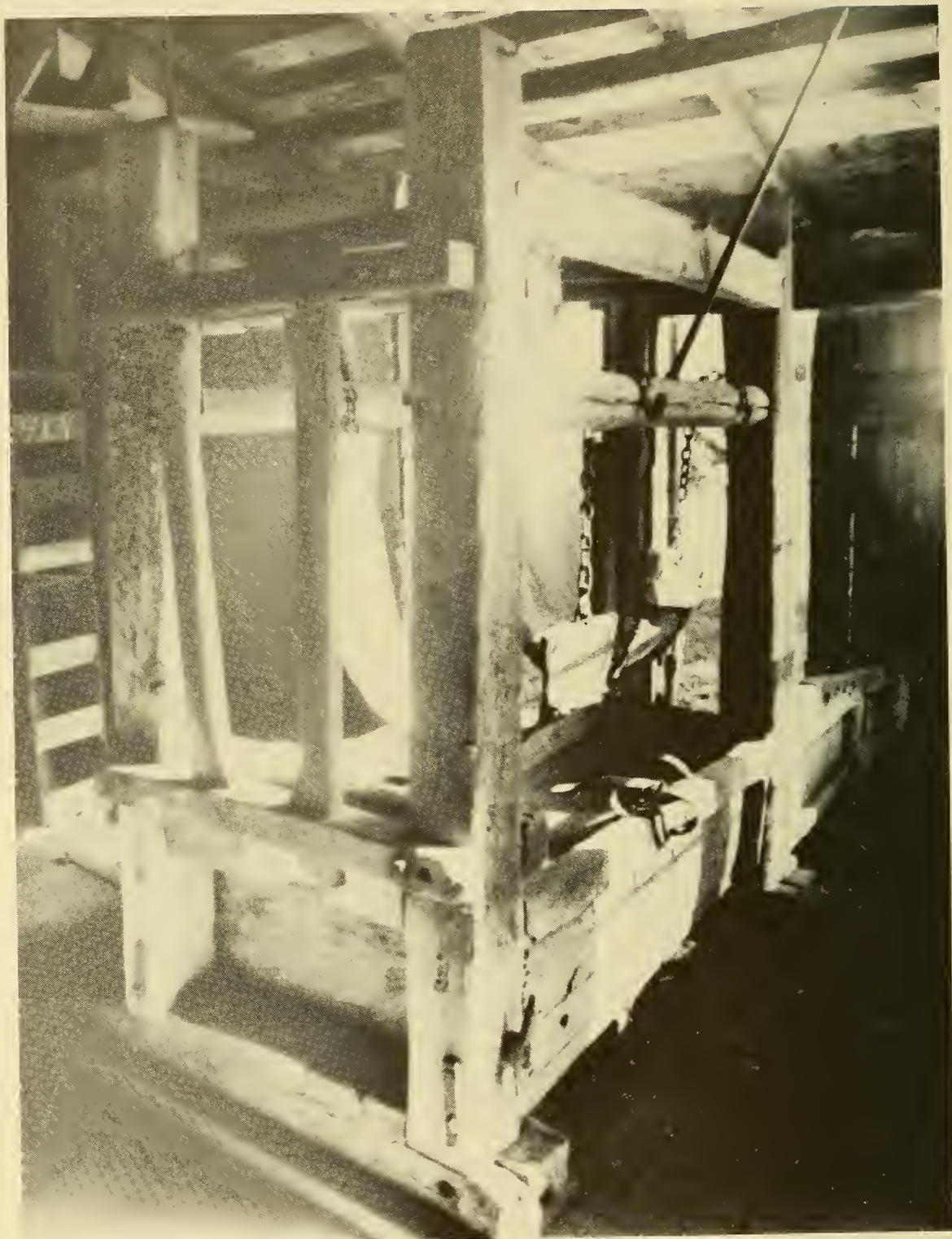
After the decline in dairy farming, chicken farming became popular. It was about this time that Professor Lunn moved into Halifax and raised his stock on Carver Street. After some years of raising eggs and fowl for market, his son Alfred moved into the dressing of fowl and shipping to market. Much of the business was transporting "day-old" chickens. The trucking end of the business was up-to-date and grew to be a significant part of the economy in Halifax. Except for the Sturtevant farm and a few in neighboring towns, the chicken business is now centered in other areas. It was common to hear the farmers speak of incubators with 20,000 eggs "setting" at a time. It was astounding to learn of the Sturtevant boys earning \$100 a day sexing day-old chicks. And, it was not unusual to hear my son or some other driver of the Lunn fleet say "I'll call you tomorrow from Arkansas or from a delivery point in the Carolinas." At one time in my youth I worked as a clerk in Willet's Store, now the home of Mrs. Gray opposite our library. I also worked in Grant's Store and Restaurant on Broad Street in Bridgewater while I attended high school and I ran a small grocery route on Saturday mornings through Westdale. I soon learned that it was imperative to handle the eggs with care and to see to it that the kerosene cans were secured by pushing a small potato into the pouring spout. So my knowledge of the egg aspect of the poultry business and its intricacies is basic to a degree. But Mr. Lunn never entrusted me with a trailer load of eggs or chicks. So, let's move away from the poultry business.

When it needed expert attention, my bike was usually tended by Charles Cook, as previously mentioned. It was nearly two miles to Mr. Cook's Shop, located on the corner of Plymouth and Monponsett Streets. Brass plugs, rubber plugs and links for broken chains were far beyond my ingenuity. Once in Mr. Cook's Shop, however, the exposure to all the new gadgets was often too much to bear, so a fellow patronized the shop as little as possible to keep from buying it all. My father's bike was a few years older than mine and it had solid rubber tires. It cost him \$100 and was a Columbia. When I was at the Brockton Fair some ten years ago with an industrial exhibit for the Town of Halifax I met a gentleman who told me of his association many years before with my father and that my father had helped him fix his bicycle. It had wooden wheels bound by iron tires. I have a picture of the vehicle in my collection. Peter Tetraut also ran a repair shop for bicycles, but the bulk of his business had to do with shoe repair. He was located on Circuit Street opposite the Blacksmith Shop. Speaking of shoe repair, Mr. Charles Whitney, a Civil War veteran, kept a shoe repair business at his home on Plymouth Street next door to what is now an apartment complex known as the Farmhouse. Mrs. Myrtle Armstrong, an Estes before marriage, tells of how she'd go to Mr. Whitney's shop during lunch break from school at the Town Hall for minor repairs to her shoes and return in time to make the afternoon session. The trip was a good quarter of a mile or more. Mrs. Armstrong was the church organist for many years. She was also the accompanist for all social gatherings in the town. All such affairs were usually held in the church or Town Hall. She recently turned ninety. The blacksmith shops that have served this community since the founding of the settlement afford an opportunity to study the habits of the townspeople, and the individual blacksmiths in particular.

The town fathers felt the need for a blacksmith to do the iron work for the local farmers, the lumbermen and the millwrights, so they contracted with Job Drew on July 23, 1805 to come to Halifax and ply his trade. He set up shop on Hemlock Lane, a short distance from where the Town Barn now stands. This blacksmith shop burned down long ago and, in turn, several others were set up in different parts of town, usually near the mills or the furnaces on Furnace Street. One of the latter was the shop at the junction of Plymouth and Circuit Streets at Pine Street. Known as the John Watson Shop, it was founded in 1878. The blacksmiths that came and left Halifax through the years were mostly itinerant smiths until my father's appearance in 1893. He began as a young man in a business that would last until his death in 1946. The original shop did not have the addition that is now used by Frank Malaney as an auction gallery. This addition was made in 1915, as we expanded the operation of the shop to include automobile repairwork. We were the first, incidentally, to offer a filling station and garage in Halifax. My connection with the garage was to last only a short while, as I left to teach school in Bridgewater in 1920. The shop has an ox frame used for shoeing oxen. This and the frogs are the principal relics left from the days when a man's pace was almost "down to a walk." In those days, when



The J. B. Baker Blacksmith Shop, built in 1875, located in triangle formed by Plymouth, Pine and Circuit Streets.



Ox Frame — located in the J. B. Baker Blacksmith Shop on Old Plymouth Street.

horses set the pace, much of the settling of the world's problems took place in the village blacksmith's shop. One sometimes thinks that people are too busy to be neighborly these days, but not so in years past. The blacksmith shops provided a common meeting place for the menfolk. Situated at the crossroads, and unavoidable (for it was the only place nearby for service to a man and his beast), princes and paupers, generals and politicians, governors and, in one case, a future president, stopped to visit with my father. National, state, county, municipal or town officials would pass through at various times and stop at the shop. James Curley, or "Jim" as he liked to be called, Mayor of Boston, and later Governor of Massachusetts, chose to say hello to Father whenever he passed this way. And speaking of meeting people, when the Tricentennial of the Pilgrim's Landing in Plymouth was celebrated in 1920, it was the thrill of my life to be able to stand on the platform with my father and greet President Harding.

Turning back, when I was about ten years old, an important event occurred in my life. Mr. Robert Edwards, the renowned technician in the field of electronics and electrician for the Colonial Theater in Boston, bought the John Watson place next to the Blacksmith Shop. He grew to be a lifelong friend and was like a foster parent to the Baker children. The Edwards used their place as a summer residence but, after retirement, spent many years as our neighbors in Halifax. He and his wife were childless and adopted us Bakers into their lives and shared many of their activities with us. When I was old enough to appreciate it, I would go to Boston via train to be met at South Station by the Edwards and taken to concerts and the theater, etc. I attended the 1912 World Series in Boston as their guest. Brother James and sister Zillah followed suit when their turns came. Our association with these wonderful people spanned almost sixty years.



General Store, Halifax center, opposite Town Hall, 1903.

STORES

The first store in Halifax was located on the corner of what is now Elm Street and Furnace Street. It was run by Thomas Croade. Today's center of town was, in the very early days, merely the high point of and the choice of site for the "Meeting House." The mills were usually the center of activity and located on waterways before any established roads were available for travel. A very elderly friend of mine, long since gone, told me how his father would leave his house on Monponsett Street and go to the Monponsett Lake, get aboard his boat and run it across the West Lake and down through Stump Pond to a landing on what is now Elm Street, then walk up to Inglee's Store (Mr. Croade's successor) to make his purchases. He said it was the same route his father took many years before him when this was the only source of "store-bought" goods in town. This building is now used as a residence. At the start of this century, Nathan Perkins kept the store, followed by Frank Lyon. His daughter, Bertha Lyon, was my piano teacher when the family lived there. She married Carl Otto and in time they built a home in the rear of Otto's Park. Mr. Carl Otto was a professional musician and he took part in numerous town affairs. The next store to appear was located near the site of the present Central School. Martin Bosworth operated an Ordinary or Inn here and indications are that he ran a general store near the Town Hall. Old maps place the store halfway between the Town Hall and Hemlock Lane. Later, the Packard Bros. founded a store on the land directly opposite the Town Hall. Were it still there it would rest right in the middle of Mrs. Violet Brown's driveway. The Post Office was located here, too, and the hitching rails stood on the westerly side of the store even in my time. The Packard's store was situated a little back, and in the complex was a law office where Judge Robert Harris of East Bridgewater supposedly studied his first law lessons under the tutelage of Welcome Young. For a short time Harris taught school in Halifax. I have seen the orders for the drawing of pay for him by the Board of Selectmen. When the Packard Bros. dissolved their business, Frank Lyon bought it. George Estes was the next owner and operator of the store. Family provisions, grain for farmers, the Post Office and weighing scales made up the major part of the business. The weighing scales were an official set of platform scales installed opposite the store on what is now the Town Hall lawn. They were known as the "Hay Scales." All such items as farm products, hay and grains would be weighed while still on the wagon and a previously established weight of the empty wagon would be subtracted from the gross weight for the net weight of the actual goods. The official slip was never



Hayward's Corner — the crossroads of commerce and traffic in modern-day Halifax.



Rose's Boston Store. Opposite Ocean Ave. on Monponsett Street. Owned by Fred and Rose Syston (about 1910).

challenged, the weigher having been duly authorized by town officials to perform this important task. Eventually, the Estes store was moved to the foot of the hill next to where the library now stands, and the scales followed along. A son, Albion, ran this store for some years, then Ans Anderson took over. Harry Minor ran it next and it included the Post Office. Rufus Case then followed as proprietor and he eventually sold out to Alex King. Mr. King kept the store in this building a few years and finally moved it to the present-day King's Supermarket complex. His son, David, is proprietor of the entire operation which gives Halifax much the same air as other towns in the area. Considering the fact that the police and fire stations and the Allied Auto Parts plant are all within a "stone's throw" of each other, we have a fairly large business center. The Gentile family had previously established another market on Monponsett Street near the Hanson line. The control and management of that enterprise is still in the family. Cesare Gentile, Sr., the founder, was active in the American Legion and a generous and helpful citizen. His two sons, Cesare, Jr. and Alberico, and their mother Grace M. C. Gentile carried on the business until Cesare Jr.'s death in 1971. He served for years on the Finance Board of the town and made many contributions to the orderly process of government in Halifax. The remaining members of the Gentile family now conduct the business.

On Monponsett Street, beyond Ocean Avenue, there was a store known as the Boston Store operated by Arthur Willet. Mr. Edward G. Henrich operates another store on the corner of Annawon Drive and Holmes Street. This is known as the "Halifax Superette." It was run by Carmen Scrow prior to Mr. Henrich's takeover. Nearly opposite on the other side of the street is a town-owned tract of land that will, no doubt, be a playground. For many years, there was a store at the corner of Fuller and Wood Streets. This small neighborhood store is first noted on the 1879 map and, also, on the Assessor's listing. It seems to have closed around 1940. There seems to have always been a store in the Drew neighborhood. The first one was part of the early Drew Mill complex. Mr. George Drew was frequently in the picture of town politics. He was a successful bidder for the care of the town paupers, as we have mentioned, and he and his brother were publishers of a local paper. One of these two brothers had a position on the Prudential Committee of his district. He did not agree with the arbitrary exclusion from the school of those living outside the district's bounds. He was convinced that his children would have many more advantages at the school near the center of town. But, it appears that notwithstanding all of Mr. Drew's efforts, the Drew children stayed in their own district school. At the turn of the century, my mother visited "Gramma" Drew in the old home that was the original garrison house. The occasion for mother's visit was that it was Mrs. Drew's 100th birthday and mother noted Mrs. Drew's alertness and congeniality. The house was dismantled in the early 1920's and used in part to restore a place in Duxbury. Mother retained the impression of low ceilings in the front hall and often spoke of the grandfather clock that graced a corner of the hallway at the entrance.

A store built from Lysander Hayward's resources was operated by his daughter Linda and her husband Russ Bonney. This store was almost exactly on the spot

where the new Post Office now stands. Mr. Hayward, a Civil War veteran, was a hunter and a good friend of mine. After an early bout with rheumatic fever I needed special nutritional aid, so my parents arranged for me to eat lunch with the Haywards every noontime during the school year. This ate into the play portion of my noon hour and I'm not sure that the course was entirely remedial. The Haywards lived in a house opposite the Central School. There was a smokehouse in the rear of their open lot behind the barn. The smoke from this house aroused our curiosity and once we ventured near enough to see the operation at least from a distance, but we turned in squeamish haste from the horrid obnoxious odors and willingly returned to school.

Many years later Henry and Mabel Hammond took over a store on Plymouth Street and they lived in the quarters at the rear of the building. Hank's Garage is now located here. Grandpa Hammond lived with this family and he planted his garden on a small plot of my land across the street from the store. There never was a garden like it for being orderly and prosperous. I just kept quiet about to whom the garden efforts should be credited. Many compliments came my way on the garden project and Grandpa Hammond and his "masterpiece."

The schoolhouse on Elm Street that moved so much down through the years was bought by Ed Vaughan at an auction and he sold it to a Mr. Rogers who converted it into a store. Later, it became the Fernandez Store, after which it became the home of Mrs. Fernandez. I started school in that building, I bought victuals there from Mr. Fernandez and I have a hunger to acquire the building and feast my mind on it.



Grover's Corner — about 1900.



New Post Office — began service in 1976.



Tomson Stone on Thompson Street (Route 105) marks the site of the log cabin which was the home of John Tomson, the first settler in Halifax.

MILITARY

There can be no question who earned the right to be called our first soldier. John Tomson lived among the Pilgrims at Plymouth working and exploring with the men of the young colony. They ventured into the heartland to learn the whereabouts of the native Indians and to stay alert to the moods of these newly-made acquaintances. For a period of forty-three years, which intervened from the landing of the Pilgrims to John Tomson's time, there was no violent breach of the peace that began when Samoset shouted greetings to the band of visitors at Plymouth. During Massasoit's control of the relationship between the two races all was peaceful. However, almost immediately upon his passing, the new leaders, Wamsutta, and then Philip, both assumed hostile attitudes toward the white men. It is interesting to note that before the outbreak of hostilities the new settlers had thought it wise to establish a fort at Nemasket, the Indian name for the present-day Middleboro. With the start of King Philip's War in 1675, it was decided by the people of Plymouth that the charge of the fort at Nemasket would prove beneficial if Halifax's first settler and soldier, John Tomson (Lt.), should be appointed its commander with sixteen men in his company. He had settled his family in Halifax and directly in Philip's path of destruction to Plymouth. When war came, he, his wife and children fled to Nemasket. On their way they could see reflections of their burning cabin in the dark skies, proving that the Indians had meant their threats. Also in their flight, they passed George Danson who lived on this same trail to the fort. Tomson advised Danson to follow quickly. He failed to appear at the fort, however, and the next morning a search party found his body lying in a brook. This is the small stream which passes under Thompson Street—now called Danson Brook.

Shortly after the outbreak of King Philip's War, the fort at Nemasket was abandoned by Commander Tomson. He, his men and their families pulled back to Plymouth. In 1676 a battle took place between the Indians and white settlers in Halifax at Monponsett on the land between the lakes which we call White's Island. Some 120 Indians were captured in the engagement, marched to Plymouth and held until the war was over. The route they marched over was known as the Bridgewater Trail, first opened to overland travel in 1668 as noted on the Latham Map.

Begun on June 21, 1675 the war was over by 1677. King Philip himself was shot on August 4, 1676 by another Indian, a subject of the Squal-Sachem Awashonks—allies of the English. While Indians like Philip feared the growing strength and encroachment of the white man, Indians like his assassin felt that opposition

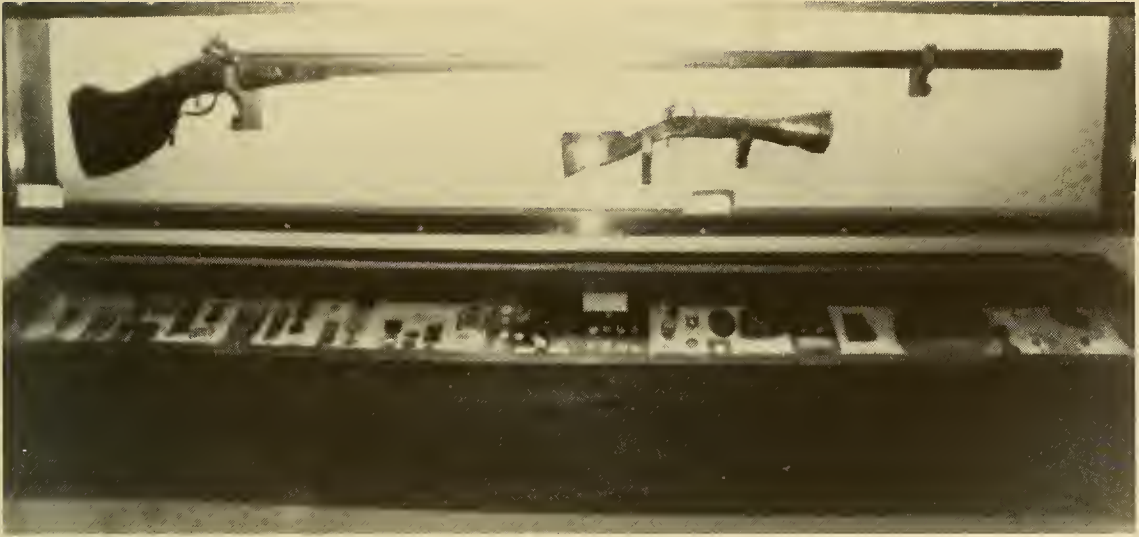
to the English was unrealistic. Bridgewater residents had many close calls with danger during the war, as did Scituate which was surrounded by enemy warriors. Much pillaging and burning took place here. All of the terrain between Narragansett Bay and the Massachusetts Bay coastline was involved in the hostilities. Halifax lay smack in the middle of this "war arena." It's no wonder that both big and little boys still hunt out plowed fields scratching for old Indian arrowheads.

A stone monument marks the place where Wamsutta, Philip's predecessor, was supposed to have been questioned on his stand with the English. He was asked to appear in Plymouth at a later date, says the bronze plaque, but this request had to be turned down because of his poor health. It is believed that he died en route home to Narragansett Bay, whereupon King Philip, his brother, succeeded as chieftain. One hostility which seemed to unite all whites against the Indians was the murder of the Indian Sassamon by agents of Philip. Sassamon had been a loyal disciple of John Elliott. The guilty Indians were eventually apprehended and hung.

It was only a short time after the burning of the Tomson cabin that the large group of warrior Indians were captured on White's Island. In the battle, Captain Church lay siege to the island, bringing up his men from the north or from what we now know as the Monponsett Inn area. The water gap on that side was shallow enough to wade across and permit attack from that direction. The surprised Indians were driven out into the deep water near the area where the present bridge is located. Another contingent of soldiers, posted nearby, easily surrounded the entire force and marched them to Plymouth as prisoners. During this same war, 150 Indians were captured at Bridgewater and marched through Halifax to Plymouth. Halifax was certainly no "Happy Hunting Grounds" for the Indians.

As a reminder of these historical events, a marker stands on Thompson Street near where John Tomson's cabin stood. The marker is mounted on the hearthstone from the first frame house that was built to replace the destroyed cabin. This second building was torn down in 1838 by the Thompsons. I have bricks from this second house, appropriately marked. The present house has raised all the Thompson descendants to this time on a 6,000-acre tract of land originally owned by John Tomson and bought from Josiah Wampatuck. A record of this transaction can be found in the Registry of Deeds, Book 4. John Tomson had settlers as near as four miles away—to the southeast and to the west some seven miles. Nine generations of Thompsons have lived on this land including Mrs. William Crosby, youngest daughter of Jabez Thompson, now living in Milton, Massachusetts.

From the end of King Philip's War to the official birth of Halifax, nearly two-thirds of a century passed, during which occurred the French and Indian Wars, including Queen Anne's, 1702; King William's, 1689-1697; King George's, 1743-1748; and the "Old French and Indian War" of 1755-1763. Halifax men fought in some of these conflicts and the town's collection of memorabilia includes a powder horn carried by Simon Leach of Halifax. The issue was French vs. English supremacy. At most, France hoped to confine England to the narrow strip of land along the Atlantic seacoast. The Spanish explorations tended to keep to the southern part of the continent; the St. Lawrence River and Basin was



Tomson Gun — used by John Thomson, Halifax's first citizen, who commanded the fort at Middleboro at the start of King Philip's War in 1675. This firing piece is 7 feet, 4½ inches long with a barrel of 6 feet, 1½ inches. Its caliber, 12 balls to the pound; whole weight, 20 pounds, 12 ounces. It is shown on display at the Bristol County Museum in Taunton.



Wamsutta Stone on White's Island where Massasoit's oldest son, Wamsutta, spent his last days before his death in 1662.



Pope's Tavern — opposite the Congregational Church on Plymouth Street. The site of many historic moments, it is now the home of Violet Brown.

a favorite avenue for French traffic. They meant to travel along this waterway into the heart of the continent and down into the Mississippi Valley, encircling the English and impeding the further spread of their empire. In 1718 the French settled in at New Orleans. There was, of course, the ever-present threat of the Indian Confederation called the "Five Nations." Allies of the English, they were opposed by the Algonquins who fought with the French. This latter group operated mainly in the Northeast.

There was always a sense of uneasiness with the Indians. In 1734, after Halifax was founded, the town voted constables for the eastern part of town and night watches for the western half. Except for the militant atmosphere that prevailed due to the conflicting interests of the rival European powers and the wooing of support from the Indians, there was little military action on the continent up to the Revolutionary War. Halifax settlers like all other Americans were determined to secure new lives as free men and women whether or not they had to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to do it. Halifax sent representatives to council meetings and contributed to plans for war and the establishment of a government afterwards. Almost to a man, Halifax citizens were uncompromising patriots to the cause of freedom. Just prior to the Revolution, a soldier by the name of Taylor deserted from an English Army company stationed in Marshfield. He fled to Halifax to the home of Thomas Drew. Three men from the British company were detailed to bring him back and decided to try a ruse on Drew.

One posed as a deserter, too, but Drew recognized the trick and told Taylor to hide in nearby woods. The other two men became exasperated that their game hadn't worked and went to Noah Thompson's home to protest. Thompson, sick in bed, heard their threats. He took his gun, leveled it at the soldiers and shouted, "You are dead men or leave my house." They left. News spread like wildfire and the English soldiers were confronted at the Meeting House by two Minutemen, Bradford and Bartlett. They had only recently become part of this local group anticipating trouble with the Mother Country. They ordered the British to stop and surrender. Their muskets were not loaded however, and noting this the British cocked their pistols and ordered the two Yankees to march to Daniel Dunbar's Tavern. Mr. Dunbar was a Tory. Within the hour the tavern was surrounded by angry Minutemen who asked that the patriots be released. The request was denied and they tried to break in to rescue Bradford and Bartlett. The British threatened to kill the prisoners. It was a standoff until Josiah Sturtevant, a justice of the peace, arrived. He ordered the two Minutemen bound over for court on the charge of breaking the law against harassing English Patrols on the King's Highway. To be sure, grievances were smoothed over this time, only to flare up again at Concord and Lexington.

The monument that commemorates our role in the Revolutionary War stands opposite the Congregational Church. It was dedicated on June 17, 1911; featured speaker at the ceremony was ex-Governor Long. The monument was purchased from the Kavanaugh Bros. for \$125. The bronze plaque fixed to the



Revolutionary War Monument, erected and dedicated in 1911.

stone came from Murdock Reed Co. for \$190. Sylvanus Bourne was paid \$26.45 for labor making a grand total of \$342.25. The Halifax Grange contributed \$10.00 and the Farmer's Club \$10.00 to help defray expenses. All of the above was taken from the Town Report of 1911.

First official record of the Revolutionary War was made in 1774 in Halifax when, on December 26, "It was voted that the minutemen drawn out for military exercise shall have their pay for two half days in a week at 8¢ per half day." Next, on January 2, 1775: "Voted to choose a member to send to the Provincial Congress at Cambridge." Mr. Ebenezer Tomson was chosen our representative. On March 18, 1776, a Town Meeting chose a Committee of Correspondence, Inspection and Safety. Included on the committee were Benjamin Parris, Judah Wood, John Waterman, Samuel Stafford Sturtevant and Deacon Jacob Tomson. At Halifax on May 27, 1776, Ebenezer Tomson Esq. and Capt. John Waterman were sworn to take a census "to know the number of inhabitants of this colony." Presumably, the military quotas were determined by such a census. (The population was found to be 672.) By the end of the war seventy-nine men had enlisted for military duty and the author has seen the acclaim that only eleven able-bodied men were left behind in the town at one time during the war.

On June 7, 1776 Halifax citizens voted \$150 to any man who would join the army for three years or to the end of the war. Men sometimes hired a substitute to take their place. It has been said that Seth Waterman, a Halifax native, was hired by eight men of this town at various times to serve for them in the war. Another Seth from our town, this time Seth Sturtevant, was one of George Washington's bodyguards in the war. He was born in Halifax on June 4, 1760. His mother was Joanna Sturtevant born in Halifax in 1736. Seth married Abigail Cushing of Duxbury and moved to Butterfield (now Sumner) on July 20, 1795. Halifax also contributed its quota of ammunition and on one occasion sent twenty blankets for use by General Washington's soldiers in their expedition to Canada. Noah Fuller was the first Halifax man killed in the Revolutionary War. He was killed by a bursting cannon in New York City. There are several entries in the Town Records referring to commissioned officers who were authorized to hire soldiers for the Continental Army for three years of duty and eight months; the said officers were privileged to hire money to meet their expenses. At this time, December 8, 1777, the Town voted: "To raise £2000 to pay what had been done in the war." Concern for safety and loyalty was common at this time. People were warned to exercise caution against monopoly and oppression. A list of the inhabitants of the town was accepted, at which time it was voted to accept John Standish, Obediah Eddy and Edward Stranger to the list. This listing was not unusual, but I suspect there was a close perusal and vigilance on the part of all. Price controls were invoked on basic commodities throughout the colony at this time as well. The community was well aware of the variances of services rendered by different men in the Town. Back in 1777 on March 17 at a town Meeting, "it was voted to choose a committee to set a value on what each man had done towards carrying out the War." It was also voted at this meeting to raise men for the war by rate. Also, and in the consideration of recompense for military service, it was passed at a Town Meeting of April 11, 1777 "to give every soldier that should enlist in the Continental Army a bounty of 10 Pounds." It was also voted at this time that "the fines that are paid into the town by

Perez Ripley and Jessie Dunbar shall be drawn out toward paying the bounty to soldiers that shall enlist in the Army for 3 years." (These two men were cited for Tory loyalty.) A list of accepted and sympathetic citizens was acted upon and on January 9, 1777 it was voted "to add John Standish, Obediah Eddy, and Edward Stranger and to appoint Benjamin Parris to procure and lay before the court the evidence that may be had against Perez Ripley, Jesse Dunbar, John Standish, Obediah Eddy and Edward Stranger of their inimical dispositions toward this or any of the United States." Many distinguished services were rendered by Halifax men in the Revolutionary War.

A List of Revolutionary War Veterans From Halifax

Richard Bosworth	Joseph Torrey
Joseph Bosworth	William Waterman
Eli Bosworth	Abiathar Wilson
Samuel Briggs	Jacob Loring
Samuel Churchill	Richard Joel
James Crooker	Asa Lyon (died)
Benjamin Parris	Consider Pratt
Samuel Parris	John Palmer
Jonah Parris	Jonathan Porter
Joshua Cushman	Joseph Matthews
Isaac Cushman (died)	Prince Edwards
Jonathan Curtis	Isaac Sturtevant
Thomas Cushing (died)	Seth Sturtevant
Ephraim Doten	Caleb Sturtevant
Elisha Faxon	Church Sturtevant
Allen Faxon	Hosea Sturtevant
Noah Fuller (died)	Lemuel Sturtevant
Jabez Hatten	Samuel Sturtevant (died)
George Harlow	Dick Sturtevant
John C. Hammett	Barrichel Sturtevant
Moses Inglee, Jr.	David Sturtevant
John Jones	Isaac Sears
Caleb Leach	Asa Shurtleff
Josiah Thompson, Lt.	Zachariah Standish
Zebediah Thompson	Joseph Tilson
Moses Thompson	Seth Thompson
Loring Thompson	Josiah Tinkham
Thomas Thompson	Seth Waterman
Levi Thompson	Isaac Williams
Nathan Tinkham	Judah Wood

On April 9, 1779 the Town voted to "Accept Acts at Concord." At this same Town Meeting "eight persons as a committee to 'joyn' with the Committees of Correspondence" were chosen. Among the men chosen to act were: Thomas Drew, Freeman Waterman, Jr. and Benjamin Parris. Specifically, Ebenezer Tomson was directed to go to Concord and Benjamin Parris to the County Convention

to be held August 23, 1779. At the July 5, 1779 Town Meeting, it was "voted not to send a Committeeman to 'joyn' with the Committee of the other towns at Concord." Subsequent to this action and not hastily, I might add, on July 26th at Town Meeting, "Ebenezer Tomson was chosen to represent the town in the convention in Cambridge." This last Town Meeting was carried over to September 1st and the Town Meeting instructed the delegate to have a printed copy of the Constitution submitted to the Selectmen of each town.

Military matters seemed to be finished and certainly the fiscal year of 1779 was about ended when, on December 27, the citizens of the town voted "2,000 pounds to pay the soldiers and other charges." The year's business was completed on December 31. (Now, in 1976, we have to close our fiscal year on June 30.)

Of course, by 1779, the war was not quite finalized and enlistment was still bothering the authorities. In July of 1780 a meeting was held to enlist eleven men. This meeting was not very productive and an adjournment was voted to "tomorrow when the sun is an hour high." They met as agreed and then adjourned to the next day at seven in the morning when they worked until four p.m. They then offered the men \$12.50 (silver) or \$75 (paper dollars) and a deal was made. On September 4, 1780, the Halifax townspeople "voted to empower the Selectmen to get wool and hire blankets made." Sheep furnished the wherewithal to meet exterior body needs but at this same time the voters appropriated \$7940 to pay for "one-half of the beef sent from this town for the army." The outlay continued with a vote "to draw money from the Treasury to pay for the two horses that were bought for service in the Continental Army." With only a short respite, on November 13, the town voted to have "the Selectmen get three blankets and pay as much as 100 pounds Continental Currency." The plague of inflation had set in and, back as early as June 20, a vote was passed "To give to the nine men who were to go into the Continental Army for six months, in addition to their wages, five hundred dollars paper currency for the first month to be paid before they march and five pounds, ten shillings per month in silver money." They were to be paid for the remaining five months when they return. Seventeen days later, on July 3, at a special Town Meeting to deal with soldier's pay, it was voted to "Pay \$1200 each to Jonathan Porter, Levi Tomson and George Harlow and 35 bushels of Indian corn and 5 bushels of rye for 3 months to each man." The committee voted to do this first, then dismissed the vote when a new committee brought in the suggestion of \$25 (silver) per month to go to each man. (Money was compared at the rate of twenty-five silver dollars being equal to 150 paper dollars.)

When the war did finally come to an end, the rather long period of organizing the federal government and then the state and local branches began. Halifax had been a governmental unit as a town since 1734. Now, as a part of the United States, and as a division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we actually began to function in 1791. The record that first shows town functions is in my possession and the first entry is dated 1792.

The Halifax Militia Company was organized in 1792. The charter was signed by Governor John Hancock. This military group lasted for many years after fighting both the War of 1812 and the Civil War; it earned distinction for having the longest continuous record of a militia company in this state. This company

responded to a call to duty in the War of 1812 under the command of Captain Asa Thompson, who was distinguished among other things for his height. It is recorded that he was six-feet-six-inches tall and he is purported to have equipped himself with sword and sidearms equal to his height.

Unrest persisted during the years immediately following the Revolution. A state of readiness was maintained by our local militia. The War of 1812 was in the offing and the young nation knew that resting on its laurels was just wishful thinking. On August 7, 1809 there was a Town Meeting with Timothy Wood as moderator and it was voted, "to give to these men who are attached to the orders of the Government if ordered to march for their country, to each man attached to Capt. Cushman's Co. and the property of the men that belong to Halifax in the Light Infantry Co.—\$20 per month for the time they shall be in the service of the United States."

There are very few references in Town Records to Halifax men involved in engagements in the War of 1812. Asa Thompson and his company of militia were on duty and at ready for service along the coastline wherever threatening English naval forces were located. We know that the sieges of ports or harbors at Marion and Mattapoisett were carried out and that pillaging and destruction of wharfs and crafts took place. Our men were ready for the call to help. The "Tall Captain," Asa Thompson, led his men to aid as did each member town of the county. Two sailors from Halifax were taken prisoner off American boats and impressed into service by the English. These two men were prisoners for two years. No details of their experiences are recorded to my knowledge, but there is an account of their return home. One Sunday morning, when most of the community was assembled in church, a warning was passed to the parson that two persons had arrived at the entrance to the sanctuary and sought admission. Doors were swung open and in walked the long lost men. Greetings over, the preacher turned to the appropriate excerpts from the "Good Book" and helped to make for a very happy reunion of lost sheep to his fold. I was informed of this incident by Lucy Harlow, a direct descendant of one of the two returned sailors.

Seemingly, the horizon didn't clear very fast after the War of 1812 for we find that on September 8, 1817, it was voted "to build a powder house this fall." The international affairs kept the continent of Europe and its sister continent, North America, in great turbulence while the turmoil of the Revolution subsided. Napoleon's ceding of the Louisiana Territory to the United States made us a power of such magnitude that no force anywhere threatened our status. This acquisition did much for us in establishing our spot in the family of nations. The Monroe Doctrine, bargaining with Russia or resolving outbursts on the Mexican front were the only issues that required firmness and direct bargaining and, thus, we had become a factor in the world.

There were incidents during the outbreak of the Civil War that may be of enough interest to warrant their inclusion in the reporting of this significant part of American history. Daniel Webster, perhaps more than any other person in America, tried to resolve the question of slavery by compromise and peaceful resolve. A great statesman, Webster tried to convince men to slow down and work on the problem by taking short steps, short of war, and to legislate programs that would eventually throw off the yoke of slavery. He was a frequent

visitor to our Pope's Tavern when he was away from his duties in Washington. (Back as early as 1830, we find a newspaper account of the Republican Convention of this district nominating Ex-President John Quincy Adams to the 22nd Congress at a district meeting held in Halifax in this same Pope's Tavern.) The wrong could no longer be tolerated, however, and a frightful state of division came to pass when Lincoln finally fired the torch that began the fratricide of our nation.

Feelings seem to have been such that preparations for action were the order of the times. In 1853, "Elijah Poole was paid \$10 for providing a place to store arms and military equipment." Also, the records show at this time "A list of all members of the Halifax Light Infantry Co." It was also voted on December 27, 1853, in a resolve by Charles H. Paine, to have it entered on the Town Records "Not to accept *Nebraska* and *Kansas* into the Union." This and similar actions by others seemed to portend disfavor for compromise.

The first official act directed at the promotion of military involvement in the war was the following: "May 7, 1861, voted that the credit of the town is hereby pledged to those belonging to this town and also to those who may hereafter either volunteer or be drafted from the town, to fight in the defense of our government, in a sum sufficient, taken in conjunction with the pay received from the government, either State or National, to make the sum total of 20 dollars per month for the time they are actually engaged in such military duty, and in the case of their decease, the same extra pay is to be paid to their heirs." This motion was made by Captain George Drew.

It is interesting to recall that back in a Town Meeting of August 7, 1809, with Timothy Wood as moderator, it was voted to "give these men that are attached to the orders of government, if they are ordered to march for the service of the government, to each man attached to Capt. Cushman's Company and the property of the men that belong to Halifax Light Infantry Co. shall have \$20 per month for the time they shall be in the service of the U. S." It seems as if \$20 per month was the going wage for pay in the Army for a long time.

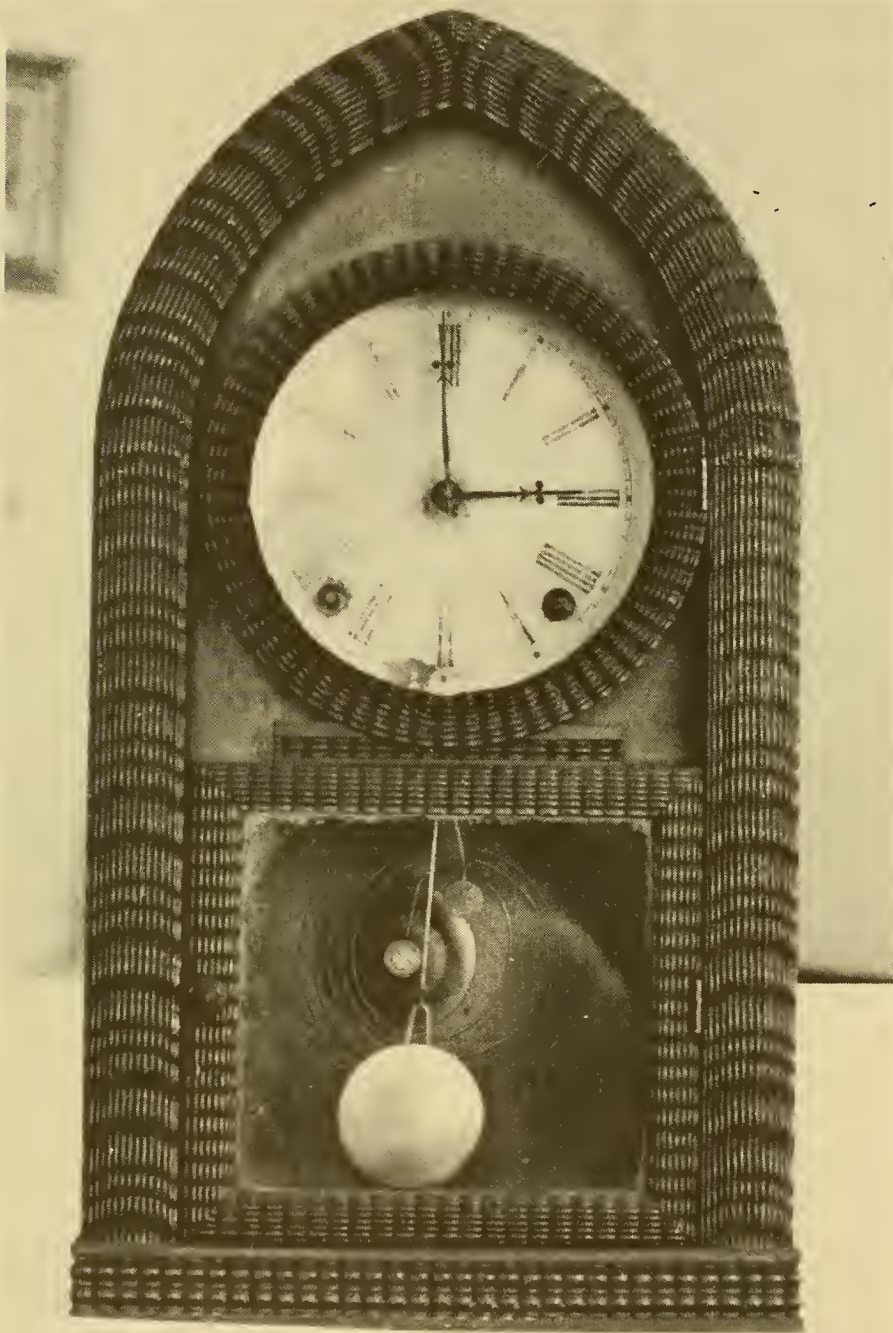
During this same period, before the outbreak of the war, there were other incidents that attract our attention. The mention made of Daniel Webster is certainly in this category, but how much of the whole theme of the Civil War seems to have in retrospect hinged on the attitudes and actions of the times leading up to the terrible climax—the war. Thus, when one happens upon an item connecting distinguished persons or happenings with a certain period of our history, it holds special significance for us. A case in point: Frances Humphrey (Sturtevant) in her novel, *Parks Tavern*, which places Halifax as its setting, writes of the patrons of the Tavern. She was well acquainted with Daniel Webster and makes an interesting account of going to Marshfield for salt hay from the marshes and, while there, visiting with the distinguished statesman. Another interesting story of this era deals with the "Grasshopper Cannon" of the 1860's. This military piece may not have played a big role in a military sense but its name infers what it really was. It was supposedly cast in the foundry on Furnace Street in Halifax. Lyonville people originally owned it—that is, those people living in Halifax near the Blacksmith Shop or around the corner of Old Plymouth and Circuit Streets. Each year, this cannon was hauled along by young fellows as one of the attractions in the Fourth of July "Horribles" Parade. Compared to

the usual noisemakers, its explosive blast must have contributed a horrible detonation. Therefore, its possession was much envied. It is said that its capture by one group from another could furnish script for numerous episodes in the art of detection. At one time, it was almost lost for all time. In fact, for some twelve years it was missing and much talked about. The nearest authoritative evidence to reach my ears as to its whereabouts came from James T. Thomas, Librarian of our Holmes Public Library for forty-five years, first Superintendent of our Public Schools, and an ordained minister here in our church. He grew up in Halifax and was only a small fry when the firing piece was hidden. Mr. Thomas would say, "It is laying in the bottom of Stump Pond." He lived on the shore of Stump Pond across from Tinkham's Rock. And all he would say after the endless inquiries about the Grasshopper Cannon is, "Go search around Tinkham's Rock." Some one hundred years ago another fellow used this same rock in a trade he carried on. He sold moonshine and after filling and corking his jugs with the commodity would suspend them by rope through the handles to an axle that was placed on two wheels below the surface. He had only to roll the whole deal into the water and, providing the water was deep enough, it would cover the entire illicit contraption nicely. In any case, neither the Grasshopper Cannon or the moonshine has ever been recovered by anyone I know.

By 1861, Halifax and the surrounding communities were fast becoming belligerently disposed to the issue of slavery. Meetings were held and the discourse was largely anti-slavery. Clubs were organized to promote action or peaceably resolve the cancerous condition that could no longer be tolerated. The die was finally cast and we began our cleansing of an intolerable situation—slavery. Our militia marched at the very outset of the Civil War with Captain Charles Lyon and Lieutenant Nathaniel Morton who were assigned the task of recruiting for the Halifax Militia or Company C 5th Regiment, Massachusetts Militia. Perhaps a little background on their involvement would be helpful here. The Regimental Commander of the 5th was Colonel David W. Wardrop of New Bedford. He commanded the most widely spread regiment in the state. On April 15, 1861, the 5th was called, along with the 4th, 6th and 8th regiments. Company C of Halifax was issued orders at 2 a.m. and the Plymouth company at 3 a.m. On April 16th the Cambridge Co. was assigned to the 3rd Regiment and, later, on May 9th Companies D, E, I, M were also assigned to the 3rd Regiment. The 5th sailed from Boston on the 17th of April under sealed orders from Central Wharf. When they were nine miles out to sea the orders were read instructing them to sail for Fort Monroe in Virginia. Once there, they were immediately embarked on the gunboat *Pawnee* and sailed to Gosport Navy Yard to destroy the drydock, construction houses, yards, buildings and all vessels and ammunition. Once the mission was completed, the *Pawnee* sailed back to fortress Monroe where they arrived on the morning of April 21. So, in actuality, the 5th Regiment was the first Northern Voluntary Unit to land "aggressively on Southern soil." Company C under the command of Captain Chamberlain with "drawn bayonets and loaded muskets suppressed insubordination in the Naval Brigade." The regiment next occupied Hampton where Companies A, B, and C were the main guard. The regiment returned on July 19 and was mustered out on the Common amid great cheering.

I have a picture of the recruiting poster that was used to solicit support for Company C and I knew in my youth as many as ten men who took part in this terrible war. Therefore, when it comes to my chronicling of the Rebellion, I feel I have had a unique point of view, inasmuch as I have the recollections of some of these men reaching into the actual intimacies of the Civil War. My early interest came from association with these veterans, some of whom were relatives of mine and then were neighbors and fellow townspeople. For the first twenty years of my life I lived next door to Captain Charles Lyon of the Halifax Light Infantry Company which responded to Governor Allen's call to travel South to put down the Rebellion. I may have even learned to tell time from the very clock that stood on the mantle in Captain Lyon's kitchen (which now sets on a mantle in my brother's home) and which was used by Captain Lyon to set his schedule of departure at 2 a.m. on that morning in April. I remember one incident involving Captain Lyon when I was a child. As a close neighbor, he would be in and out of our home two or three times a day. A neighboring friend, who owned a .22 rifle, and his friends were testing their marksmanship at the blacksmith shop one day, under the watchful care of my father. The firing pit was in the neighborhood of the anvil, near the forge. Father undoubtedly challenged the youngsters to shoot from the shop a small china doll perched in the belly rail of the ox frame located nearby in an ell off the shop. Everyone took their turn at the doll and blasted away at the target with no luck at all. Then Captain Lyon appeared at the shop door to watch. With a little coaxing and not a very long aim he let go a blast that shattered the china doll dead center. One thing was certainly not in order then, and that was the query, "Mr. Lyon, were you a sharpshooter?"

In any case, the Halifax Company C, 5th Regiment did respond to President Lincoln's call and assembled on Boston Common on the morning of April 16, 1861. Governor Andrews made the appropriate favorable remarks and the company shipped out next day to Fort Monroe to begin its distinguished part in the War of the Rebellion. My grandmother, then a girl of about eight years, recalled the scene many times, remembering the parting of husbands and wives, the separation of fathers and children, the farewells of brothers and sisters and in some instances the parting of sweethearts. My grandfather, a teenager, acted as messenger to bring news from the front that he gathered in town and reported to his neighbors. Grandfather would tell me of meeting the postal delivery man and taking the periodical left for the people to read, reporting on the fearful news of injury or death. Grandfather could read and he helped to unroll messages bound up in bundles, with tension and strain building in everyone until they heard "no news" which was "good news" to them. Casualties were the first concern and the classification of "wounded" or "killed" was awaited with breathless anticipation. My grandmother's family participated to the extent that five of her uncles were involved and one of the five died in Libby Prison. Uncle Dan Blake, an uncle through marriage, would tell me of incidents in his life in the army and, if I persisted and worked on him in indirect ways by helping to gather hay or by lending a hand picking potatoes, he would usually tell me how it "really was in the war." Occasionally in the quiet of his home I would ask him to just let me see where the bullet severed a segment of his tongue. I remember his story: He had crawled across the edge of the battlefield to lie prone at the



Captain Charles Lyon's Clock. Owned by Captain Lyon, Company C, 5th Regiment of Halifax Militia, it struck the departure hour, 2 a.m. on the morning of April 16, 1861 when Captain Lyon met with other members of the Halifax Militia at the East Bridgewater Railway Station to entrain for service in the Civil War.

little bubbling spring to quench his thirst and upon raising his head slightly to permit swallowing, his tongue was blown away by the bullet of a sharpshooter. No climax was ever necessary to this story for all would be ended when Uncle Dan displayed that fragmented tongue. Uncle Dan was the truant officer in my early school days and I enjoy repeating an entry he made which read, "I submit my attendance report. There were no trancies. Signed, Daniel Blake, Attendance Officer." His wife was Aunt Margaret to me and reportedly a spiritualist. I know that her donuts and pies were real enough, though. During the war she closed their farm on Pine Street and moved in with her folks, the Donnelly's on Circuit Street. The house was located where the road now turns into Ceasar's Auto Parts.

Among the memorabilia that have fallen into my hands through the years are the discharge papers, letters and implements of wars: guns, pistols and uniforms of many citizens who fought in the Civil War. Because of the portion of time that my life-span has covered, it has been possible for me to have had direct personal association with the principals involved in this great conflict. Aware of the difficulty of getting a degree of realism into the accounts of the past, I have tried to bring to my own narrative some personally heard events. I did chores and projects with another neighbor, Mr. Bishop, also a veteran of the Civil War. Around the Fourth of July, farmers "Get in their hay." The process consists of cutting the hay, making the hay and then bunching or stacking it. Later it had to be broken out again to dry. Mr. Bishop mowed his hay with a horse-drawn machine. I was introduced to the process as a specialist. I would sit aboard the rake and pilot the horse to roll the hay beneath the rake. I did a fairly good job of rolling the hay into neat rolls and would be impatient to get the hay "in" once the raking was done. Once the load of hay was built on the wagon we would haul it to the barn and stow it for use in the coming non-growing period. I may have been seven or eight years old at the time and thought myself very grownup. Mr. Bishop would order me up on the wagon to catch the huge forkfuls he would toss up from the field. Once I became overanxious and leaned out too far over the pile to catch another pitchfork load and caught the fork in my leg. The injury wasn't too serious but a doctor's attention was required and my haying days were terminated for a time. My partner, Mr. Bishop, kept close track of my condition. I became the casualty, he my comrade. I was nearer seven and he was nearer seventy!

Mr. Charles Whitney is one of the Civil War veterans whose discharge papers I own. Mr. Whitney did shoe repairing and lived in the house which I know best as the Gfroerer Place on Plymouth Street. I don't recall Mr. Whitney's service to me in the footwear line but he did take care of another need of mine—my bike repairs. He had a highwheel bicycle and let me ride it enough times so that I remember the unique privilege. Mr. Cephus Washburn, another veteran, lived fairly close by also. I have his papers as well. He resided on Pond Street in the last house short of the East Bridgewater line. I mark the time when all these historical papers will be placed safely in the archives being readied by the Halifax Historical Society.

We, the younger portion of the populace, enjoyed the men of the Grand Army when they would appear at school to celebrate Memorial Day and take their places as honorary guests, and we would always try to get a first hand

report of a real battle. To ride with, work with, just to look at these heroes and to hang onto their every word was one of the greatest treats of my youth and I'm more and more convinced that they were the best days of my life. Each Grand Army veteran held a special importance in the eyes of young and old and I have always felt that the people who follow this legion of patriots who tramped the swamps of Vicksburg, faced the inferno at Gettysburg and bled and died, revered them for their terrible years of service. Each year at Memorial Day services, the ranks grew thinner and the scroll we read grew longer until today there are none left to hear the bugle call. Taps have been sounded for the last of these brave soldiers. Ninety-six men from this small hamlet took up arms to save the Republic and the number who gave their lives reached the heavy toll of twenty-four, one-fourth of the total contingent.

Our Civil War Monument was the first erected in the state of Massachusetts. Standing on the lot opposite the Congregational Church, it was erected in 1867 and cost \$1000. In 1867, the *Middleboro Gazette* said:

"The Soldier's Monument was finished by the Quincy Granite Co. The Base is four feet square, the second section three feet square, and the shaft is 28 inches at the base and 16 inches at the top, with a total height of 20 feet. On a raised shield are the words, 'Our Patriot Soldiers,' and the date 1867, to show when erected. On one side is a bronze plate, with the names, ages, dates, etc. of the twenty-four men lost from this town. It cost \$1000 and is erected on the town square in front of the Congregational Church."

Aroline Soule led the movement to establish this monument paying tribute to our fallen sons. Her son, Charles W. Soule, died at Newberne, North Carolina in December, 1862, after being mustered into service on September 23, 1862 at the age of eighteen. He belonged to Company A, 3rd Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Militia. His father was John M. Soule of Halifax. His mother was Caroline Pratt of Bridgewater before marriage. She married John Soule on June 23, 1842 and gave birth to Charles on November 24, 1844. The names of the men chiseled into the granite stone alongside that of Charles Soule gave their lives to the cause of liberty or returned home to give their energies or influence to rebuild America. May such structures as our monuments help to keep before us the debt we owe to all those who have labored before us to keep going straight forward and upward in our goals. The names on the Civil War Monument are as follows:

Charles B. Lyon	Harrison D. Packard
Nathaniel Morton	William N. Bourne
Sylvanus Bourne	Henry M. Porter
Isaac Poole	Lysander W. Hayward
Josiah E. Sears	Martin L. Holmes
Thomas F. Harlow	Horace F. Packard
John T. Thompson	Charles T. Whitney
Sebediah Thompson	William S. Daby
Jacob P. Thompson	William S. Bosworth
Stephen P. Lull	George W. Hayward

Daniel P. Blake	Caphas Washburn
Charles S. Bosworth	George P. Mitchell
Seldon Pratt	Cyrus Willis
William T. Marston	Nathan D. Sturtevant
Isaac E. Raymond	Martin Osborne
Oliver E. Bryant	Cyrus Wood
Herbert P. Bosworth	Lewis A. Cobb
Horatio W. Cornish	Morton Thompson
George Drew 3rd	Asaph P. Thompson
Nathaniel B. Bishop	Soranus Thompson
Edward Bishop	Henry M. Holmes
Zephaniah E. P. Britton	Elbridge P. Bonney
Lewis T. Wade	Sylvanus Thomas
Joseph T. Bourne	John T. Sturtevant
James A. Lyon	William A. Perkins
Luther W. Hayward	Richard H. Fuller
Abel T. Bryant	George H. Bourne
William A. Lyon	Philip Gallagher
Francis E. Bryant	Ruel T. Alden
Oliver C. Porter	Lewis B. Hayward
Eugene Mitchell	Merritt R. Godfrey
Cyrus Thompson	Benjamin H. Thomas
Charles W. Soule	Simeon A. Bump
Joseph S. W. Richmond	Henry Sampson
Edward A. Richmond	Zenas Shaw
James T. Fuller	Kinsley Hayward, Jr.
William H. Fuller	Henry Jones
Frederick Fuller	Heroulas Dean
Joseph L. Melton	Gibson Beal
Lorenzo Tower	Jackson Davey
Marston E. Morse	Perly Haven
John H. Wood	Francis Morgan
Zadock Thompson, Jr.	William Braden
Horace W. Poole	Henry Cooley
L. Mendell Thompson	Joseph Ankemins
John Merrigan	William Jager



First Civil War Monument erected in the State of Massachusetts, it was dedicated in 1867.

The war that began in August, 1914, with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, quickly involved nearly every European country and, in 1917, the United States became involved. No such allying of different powers had ever taken place in the history of mankind. The grouping quickly became known as World War I. The war was fought in long battleline trenches with a terrible toll of gas casualties. The Honor Roll of Halifax Veterans hung in the auditorium of the Town Hall for many years. The alterations that took place to provide more office space in 1960 left no place for such "minor" items as Honor Rolls. They wound up on closet shelves or high resting places. I came upon the World War I Honor Roll and have resolved to preserve it and hold it in custody until a suitable place of display is settled on. It may be that I feel more sensitive about this plaque because it carries the names of fellow soldiers. And it may be that the intimacy of my association with these Halifax citizens who served in the declared cause "To make the world safe for Democracy" makes me enthusiastically concerned and alarmed over the attitudes of some present-day citizens for veterans. At this writing there are still two men living who are on the list and the number dwindles every year. Since the Revolutionary and Civil Wars have their special monuments and the conflicts since these two military events have not been noted by markers, it was decided to place a monument in the nature of a boulder on the Town Hall grounds to honor all those who served in the military. The Grange sponsored this project and marked the boulder with this simple inscription: "To Those Who Served." Those who served in World War I and returned were given a grand reception by the Halifax townspeople. The list of veterans of World War I follows:

George White	British Army	Edward H. Peterson	U.S. Army
Frank Purpura	U. S. Army	Netta May Steves	U. S. Army
Elvin L. Wood	U.S. Army	Ceasar Gentile	U.S. Army
Edwin A. Hayward	U.S. Army	Earle Snell Wood	Navy
Albert D. Wood	U.S. Army	Arthur B. Waterman	U.S. Army
Leon Garvin	U.S. Army	George W. Estes	U.S. Army
Allen Leach	Navy	Albert A. Thomas	Navy
Frank Ellis Harlow	Navy	Perley Stowell Warren	U.S. Army
Guy S. Baker	U.S. Army		
Clyde Otis Bosworth		Student and Army Training Corps	
Sylvanus Francis Bourne		Student and Army Training Corps	

A period of twenty-three years elapsed between the horrors of World War I and the beginning of World War II. Ironically, it includes the liveliest national program of American activities in history. The 20th century came in with the doors swinging wide open. The invention of the airplane, the rise of the auto age, opening the new gates to the far Pacific through the Panama Canal, the utilization of electricity—What an age! But, almost like an offstage rumble came the clouds of war once again and only twenty and three years after the first holocaust came the conflict that was to make World War I a mild affair in comparison.

In entering World War I, our nation faced the call to make the world "safe for Democracy." Three and one-half million Americans took up arms and the

entire nation poised itself to take a stand for the cause of freedom. Gold Star mothers became newly respected citizens. Disabled veterans became conspicuous among our population and gas war victims brought a new dimension to the kinds of horrors soldiers had to endure. But World War I was only a warmup for the more horrible and far more tragic World War II. The atomic bomb brought into the nomenclature of war a near ultimate in destructive forces. America used it. And yet, no other nation did more to heal the ghastly wounds of war when peace came than did America. Needless to say, there were many casualties from Halifax in World War II and the following list includes those who gave their lives, as well as those who returned home safe after giving their services in all branches of the Military:

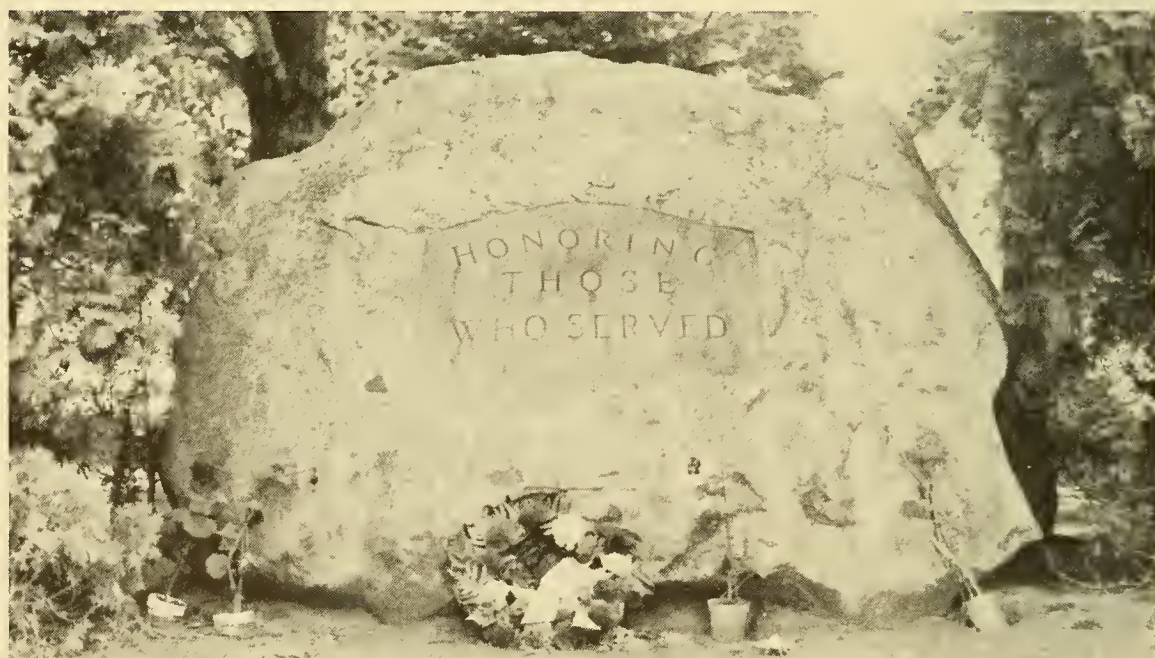
Halifax Roll of Honor — World War II

Beatrice M. Angus	Donald I. Holzworth
Hubert A. Angus, Jr.	Robert F. Holzworth
Robert S. Armstrong	Elinor A. Hunt
John P. Aubert	Francis X. Katzenberger
Henry G. Bailey, Jr.	Albert E. Kiernan
R. William Baker	Warren E. Kiernan
Walter E. Baker	David H. King
Edgar Barie	Walter A. Kostecki
Samuel Battles	Leonard E. Krappe
Richard Bell	Frederick W. Krappe
Alexander A. Bennett	Henry F. Kunkel, Jr.
Robert Bennett	William H. Leach, Jr.
Clyde O. Bosworth, Jr.	Clement A. LeClair
Daniel O. Bosworth	Victor A. LeClair
Henry M. Bosworth	Mahlon F. Leonard
Lester I. Braddock	Robert L. Levesque
Albert F. Brown	Alfred G. Lunn, Jr.
Ernst L. Brown	Richard W. MacLaughlin
Raymond N. Brown	Warren A. MacLaughlin
Karl L. Burgess	George B. McLean
George A. Caperello	Verne O. Mattson
Thomas S. Casserly	Abraham H. Michaud
Benjamin Cianfarani	Louis Michaud
Nemus Cianfarani	Walter E. Minor
Clayton M. Coggon	William G. Moffat
Elwyn M. Coggon	Robert Nickerl
James A. Crosby	Bernard J. Owens
Robert W. Crosby	Edward H. Peterson
Joseph P. Deming	Exore P. Plausse
Arthur R. Doyle	Ashton H. Poole
Donald J. Dunbar	Frank D. Purpura
John S. Dunbar	Frank C. Radford
George A. Estes	Merton C. Randall

Stanley G. Estes
Frederick D. Fahrenholt
John F. Ferry
James W. Fox
Cesare Gentile, Jr.
Albert S. Grover
John T. Grover
Reginald H. Grover
Robert L. Grover
Kenneth W. Hall
George N. Harlow
June D. Harris
Allen C. Hayward
Edwin M. Hayward
Arnold A. Heinonen
Walter E. Hilson
Alfred C. Hinchey
George E. Hoffman
*John A. Holmes
Kenneth V. Holmes
Richard D. Holmes

Stanley G. Reed
John L. Renshaw
Thomas C. Richardson
Benjamin J. Rymut
Maurice W. Schindler
Clyde B. Stevens
William J. Sturtevant
Wilbur B. Tarr
Antone C. Thomas
Arthur Thomas
Edward Thomas
George M. Thomas
Lino V. Tosoni
Elmer W. Waterman
Clifford W. Waterman
Ray B. Waterman
Edward J. Wladkowski
Josephine L. Wladkowski
Myron G. Wood, Jr.
Russell E. Wood
Robert Woodbury

*Lost in Action



World War II Monument dedicated in 1945 with the inscription:
“Honoring Those Who Served.”



Monument Grounds, opposite Congregational Church on Plymouth Street, includes Revolutionary War Monument and Civil War Monument.



“The 12 Mile Stone” marks the halfway point between Plymouth and Brockton. It is located east of Thompson Street on Route 106.

WAYS

Stone Weir marks the crossing on Snake River on the first Indian Trail through this region. This fording place is on the stream that runs through Halifax from Monponsett Pond to Robbins Pond. The Indian Trail crossing here allowed the traveler to come toward Hemlock Lane, turn toward the lakes and then skirt the shoreline to come along to what is now Lingan Street. This course followed Lingan Street until reaching the present Cross Street. Continuing south, one comes through the field and out near the present corner of Plymouth and Monponsett Streets. The trail then led easterly toward the old Plymouth Street cemetery opposite Richmond Park. At this point, the path ran between the present cemetery and the lakeshore. The present thoroughfare running east and west, that we know as 106, was first identified on a Latham Map as having been established in 1667. It was called the Bridgewater Trail. There is a stone marker within sight of my house with the cut numerals "12" and the letter "P". This certainly sets the distance to Plymouth as twelve miles and that is exactly correct. Brockton, in the other direction, is also just twelve miles from where the stone marker is located. This in a sense makes the east/west line bisecting the county and we are at the mid point. The other general axis, that of the north/south lay of the compass, goes roughly from Hull to Plymouth and we are just about half that stretch of distance. Conclusion? The "Heart of Plymouth County" is pinpointed at a place within sight of my residence, which is at the intersection of routes 105 and 106 in Halifax!

Route 58 has come to be a trunk line in our net of highways. This is our basic north/south artery. There is also Thompson Street, which has the distinction of a route number—105. South Street, which used to be called Cherry Street, has come to be an important thoroughfare. In the last few years, Elm Street has built up remarkably fast, and with the posting of 105 from Marion to my driveway, we have a significant amount of traffic coming from Southeastern Massachusetts to destinations in the South Shore area. Much of this traffic goes across 106 and onto Elm Street, and to points northeast of us.

The first layout of roads with restrictions and controls began very soon after the town was organized. The Bridgewater Trail was rather well defined and is named on the Latham Map that is found in the Latham Collection in the Registry of Deeds. On March 23, 1743, it was "voted that the Selectmen lay out an opening from the County Road in Halifax northward across the Herring Brook where the bridge now is and so to the house of Nathaniel Harden so as shall be most convenient for a way and least prejudicial to the owners of the land

provided the owners of the land will demand no pay for the land where said way is laid." This road ran to what is today the intersection of Elm and Hudson Streets. Following up this proposed and accepted plan, the following proposition was voted on July 4, 1743: "A vote was called to know whether the Town would build a new bridge over the Herring Brook River by David Cushman's and it passed in the negative." This bridge was to be near Benjamin Cianfarani's present home on Furnace Street where David Cushman once lived.

On March 23, 1752 the Town "voted to confirm the Selectman's layout of the highway from the Middleborough Line near the home of Samuel Fuller unto the Meeting House." By today's reckoning, this road ran from about the corner of Wood and Fuller Streets to the church and Town Hall.

There was a definite fording place on the Taunton River just below the present Childs Bridge on Cherry Street in the year 1746. I have a photostatic copy of this passageway across the river. As early as December 14, 1739, in a Town Meeting, James Sturtevant and Barnabas Tomson were directed to "go to discourse with the owners of the land in the north part of the town to know their minds whether they were willing there should be a road laid out across this land toward Abington." It will help, I think, to relate a story or two that seem the most pertinent to the development of town ways.

On August 30, 1732, before the town even had a chance to settle down, "William Holmes came to Town Meeting desiring the town to build him a bridge over Monponsett Pond for himself and family. This structure was to be five feet broad and 160 feet long covered with an inch and a half planks, promising that if the town would build such a bridge, he would acquit the town from further charge about the bridge. The town therefore voted that the town will build such a bridge as before described upon the condition that said William Holmes will acquit the town as aforesaid." This just amounted to a promise, however, for it was not until 1857, some 115 years later, that this link in the road system was actually completed. The prior vote to accommodate Mr. Holmes was subsequently rescinded because it was not possible to obtain title to the land on the shore where the bridge was to have reached. The "Pond Road" battle was a long and bitter affair. Finally, in 1847 the County Commissioners ordered the road built. This same year the town voted to have "the Selectmen write to the County Commissioners and tell them why the "Pond Road" had not been built." Soon the bridge was built as directed by the County Commissioners. We find that in 1857 the town votes "that the railings of the Pond Road be left with the Selectmen." Way back in 1834, the town was issued an "order to William Latham of \$6.00 for attending as counsel before the County Commissioners on the Pond Road." Also in 1836 on May 7, there was another order "to William Young Esq. of \$22.00 for attending as counsel before the County Commissioners 3 times to oppose the Pond Road." On June 8, the same year, an order was issued to pay "Benjamin Ellis for attending as a witness \$3.00 in connection with the bearing on Pond Road."

River crossings were a problem all the time and, as early as 1743, a vote was called "to know when the town would bring a new bridge over the Herring River." This bridge site was known as the Hathaway bridge. In 1753, the town voted to rebuild the "Long Bridge." The crossing referred to here was actually the three bridges on Thompson Street at the crossing of the Winnetuxet River.

Again, in 1757 the town voted to petition the General Court for a lottery to rebuild these three bridges. I am not informed as to whether the request was granted nor if Halifax may have set a precedent in meeting public assessment by the lottery method. I do know that the records say the "Bridges get their first rails." Another interesting observation on this bridge: "A decree was passed that the road be an open road with no gates except on each side of the river between Deacon Thomson's and Judah Wood's." Speaking of bridges and fording places and such, there were also the watering turn-outs. In 1803, "voted that those who wanted a watering place may be permitted to open one; if they will make the brook good and will rail it and obligate themselves to keep said watering place clear so as not to raise the water in the ditch above a reasonable height." Late in 1875, it was voted "to instruct the Selectmen to make a watering place between the house of E. G. Morton and the schoolhouse #1." This would be on the brook running between the present fire station and the elementary school or, as we know it, the outlet to Otto's Pond. As late as the early 1900's, I can remember the watering turnout on Thompson Street on Bartlett Brook about half way from the cemetery to Pine Street. Wherever the road crossed over a stream and if only a stream was a few inches wide under normal conditions, there was an opportunity to turn off the road, get out and allow the horse to drink the fine running, cold water.

In 1736, just after the founding of Halifax, it was voted that a new road to Plympton be built. A qualifying act was added: "That a gate be at each end of the people's land." This is interesting to the extent that several people were landowners on this route and gates must have received considerable attention in making a trip from here to our "Mother Town," Plympton. And, if the gates were numerous, so too were the number of highway surveyors. In 1784, on January 21, the town voted "Two overseers of the bridges." These men were to "notify when work was needed doing and what teams will be wanting and to see that they do a good day's work."

As late as 1799, the town voted to hire eight highway surveyors. But this did not come close to the record of all time, for in 1828 the town elected fourteen highway surveyors who were to oversee the fourteen districts. Also, at this same meeting, the town decreed by vote that gravel should be eight to ten inches in depth, having the road sufficiently crowned without disturbing the shoulders—"Believing the present system to be the most economical ever adopted and recommend that it be continued." The number of surveyors seem to have met the town's need until 1861 when there were still fourteen surveyors in the system. This same year it was voted to "Discontinue the road across from the front of Lysander Hayward's to the west of Carver Street." Today this means that the road that cut through from Plymouth to Carver Street, just next to the present Central School, was closed. On this same road, where it intersected Plymouth Street, was the location of Martin Bosworth's Ordinary. This institution gained fame from its close association with the public affairs conducted at the Meeting House which was located up the street at a respectful distance on a higher plane than was the tap room. Mention is made on many occasions of settling the affairs of State or of the Church and then repairing to Martin Bosworth's Oasis.

In 1875, it was voted to purchase a roadscraper on the Perkins Plan as



Morton Place (now home of Guy S. Baker) on Plymouth Street opposite Thompson Street (Route 105). The fence in front is included in the national listing of historic sites.

recommended in a report by Martin Howland. This is the first reference to using any type of machinery for road work. Refinements came from all directions. For instance, in 1875, this note on the road from the Plymouth line read, "It was to be crowned 1-½ feet in the center and all the upland part. The low part from the old Sturtevant place to the Nathan Soule place to be raised 1 foot above the general surface.

"The best materials found within the limits of the location, to be reserved for a dressing so as to form a hard and durable surface over the whole extent of the road bed. Side and gutters and culverts are to be converted when necessary to carry off surface water."

Plymouth Street was relocated in 1904 in front of the present-day Elementary School by being moved four to five rods to the north. Plans were in the works for our first macadam road in 1901 and a stretch of stone road was laid from the Plympton line to Holmes Street that same year. The town put up \$500 and the State \$300 for this road whose total length was one-half mile. Most of the crushed stone was brought in freight cars with a small amount gathered locally and crushed on the site. In 1912 the Town Assembly considered an article to install a cinder sidewalk from the Hanson line to the hotel. It was not passed, however, until 1961. One interesting observation is that in a Directory of 1910 I find the way off Plymouth Street that we now call Hemlock Lane called, "Sturtevant Place." This area has held the spotlight recently since the new town barn was built there and the town dump on this same street has come to be an issue.

In 1905 the Town appropriated \$500 for a stretch of stone road that ran from about Holmes Street to Monponsett Street. Piece by piece it was filled in and by 1914 another stone road was formed between Furnace Street and Universalist Hill. This hill is on Plymouth Street where now Old Plymouth Street converges in front of Robert Baker's house. The Universalist Church stood here from 1825 to around 1893. My mother was present when the building was moved down the hill to the H. M. Bosworth Place, now the home of Frank Lane. This neighborhood is known to us older natives as Lyonville. Earlier, a cutoff was made when Carver Street was brought out to its terminus on Plymouth Street between Kitty's Restaurant and the William Rudolph residence. Before that time, Carver Street came from the westerly direction by Mrs. Alton Hollis' place, and turned at right angles to head as stated before to the Martin Bosworth's Ordinary—about where the Central School now stands. In the mid-1800s, Pine Street was cut through to allow Thompson Street traffic a through way to Plymouth Street without going all the way around to Morton's Corner. One must remember that most of the town's activities centered around the Furnace Street industrial complex in those years. Naturally there are new "places" and avenues and drives and courts reaching forth as the land is being fully usurped. Today, important development is taking place on the shores of Silver Lake. Planning is also under way to open an avenue through the land lying directly between the West Lake and the busy sector of the town center just south and east of the Town Hall. The elementary school, the police and fire stations, our town banks, and of course the King's Enterprise make up the shopping center in this area. King's Shopping Center opened May 10, 1956.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON NAMES OF STREETS

Plymouth Street

From Plympton line via Town house to Bridgewater line at Hathaway Hill.

Monponsett Street

From Plympton line via Palmer mill and between the ponds to Hanson line.

Cherry Street

From Town house via Shepard Thompson's to Fuller street near the house of the late John Fuller

Thompson Street

From house of Thomas D. Morton via Jabez P. Thompson's to Middleborough line.

Pine Street

From Plymouth street near W. H. Watson's to the Timmon's house.

Carver Street

From E. H. Vaughn's to Cherry street.

Elm Street

From Plymouth via Tilson's mill to Hanson line.

Furnace Street

From Elm street via Bosworth's mill to Plymouth street.

Pond Street

From William Tilson's to E. Bridgewater line near Cyrus Washburn's.

Hudson Street

From Pond street to Hatch's Corner at Hanson line.

Holmes Street

From Plymouth street via R. R. station to Pembroke line.

Lake Street

From Holmes Street via Railroad bridge to Oak street.

Oak Street

From Pembroke line near Charles Bishop's to Plympton line near Railroad bridge.

Franklin Street

From Cherry street near Mrs. Sprague's to Plympton line.

Hayward Street

From Franklin street to Cherry street.

Cedar Street

From the terminus of Cherry street via the house of the late Isaac P. Fuller to Middleborough line.

Fuller Street

From Cherry street, crossing Cedar street, to Middleborough line.

Ash Street

From Cherry street via Thompson and Porter Mills to Middleborough line.

River Street

From Ash street to Cedar street at junction with Cherry street.

Bridge Street

From Ash street to Thompson bridges.

Walnut Street

From Thompson bridges to Bridgewater line near the Wade house.

Summit Street

From Thompson street to Walnut street.

Child Street

From Walnut street to Child's bridge.

Cross Street

From Plymouth street over hill to Bridgewater line.

Circuit Street

From Plymouth street via Red House hill to Plymouth street.

The system of ways which our ancestors chose to repeatedly push through and smooth over, to level off and straighten out, is most fascinating to one who, as a young man, spent a good part of his time "working on the roads," and traveling back and forth, during each day and sometimes at night—I suspect.

In 1896, two things happened that make an interesting duet for me personally. It was the year of my birth and the same year that the town described and adopted the names of its streets. An illustration of the page in the 1896 Town Report is included here for the purpose of authenticating the official names of the roads. The curious may check through this same report for mention of my birth. When the town clerk recorded my coming he gave me a sort of anonymous identity, listing me as a "male child." Legally I cannot place myself on the Town Records since my specific name was not recorded. My parents are named, however, in connection with this event which pretty much establishes me. As Town Historian, I come on many extenuating circumstances in searching records and problems are usually resolved by exercising due consideration of the facts. Such is the procedure necessary in this case, to agree on my official date of birth.

The streets had their names listed in a State Directory of 1922. Among all the towns in the county, we in Halifax had the narrowest road layout. From this listing we find some roads were only eight feet wide—the narrowest listed.

The water travel aspect of our historical "Ways" is perhaps the most fascinating. John Sturtevant stopped on the shores of Monponsett when he first came to Halifax. Whether he left again by land or water is not known. Perhaps he didn't leave at all. John Tomson built his home on a tributary that ran for a very short distance into the Winnetuxet River and it, in turn, emptied after a very short distance into the Great River or the Taunton River. The Indians used their trails and rivers to get about and presumably Mr. Tomson took advantage of them also. All Indian history is replete with the details of travel in birch canoes or "dug-outs." It's a foregone conclusion that the early white settlers paddled their canoes on the streams that cut routes through the forests when they wished to "Get places." Mr. Edmund Churchill, the friend who drew the sketch of the first church for me and a native of this town, related to me how his father made regular trips by water from their home to the store. He rowed from approximately where Route 58 touches the lakes and followed a course to the store which was all the way downstream, from the lakes to the corner of Furnace and Elm Streets. The operator of the store was Thomas Croade, an important figure in the organizing of our township in 1734. I have been over this route with my brother James and his wife Olive. In this crew of three, one of us became incapacitated because of a back condition, and so my sister-in-law and I navigated the course. We must have created a scene much like that when the ill Wamsutta was carried through here on his last voyage.

Many things have happened along the Winnetuxet River, most of which have occurred inside the Plympton boundaries. My friend and fellow researcher of waterways and millsites, William McVicar, has followed the Winnetuxet down its full length, through Plympton and Halifax, and can identify many ruins and indications of industrial enterprises along its shores. Lumber mills, cooper shops, cranberry box factories, thread mills and foundries, boat yards, in addition to



Surveyors who surveyed for a canal, 1909-1910, "to go through Halifax." It never matured.



Halifax Center — 1905.

other uses of its stored up energy have turned wheels which made our part of the world go around for a good long time. In 1754, two Drew vessels were launched on this stream, which traveled on down to the sea via the Taunton River that empties into Narragansett Bay. We did, you see, get two craft out of our almost completely landlocked town in the "Center of Plymouth County."

If we go back upstream and pursue the course of the river from the aforementioned Plympton, we come along to Fullertown. The pioneer of note in this area was Deacon Fuller. His farm was located on the shores of the Winnetuxet, bound on the west by the Middleborough Town line. A bit downstream, Raven Brook from the Great Cedar Swamp enters the Winnetuxet. Deacon Fuller had the idea of cutting a canal to eliminate a long sharp elbow in the Winnetuxet River and to back up a head of water at the confluence of the two water sources—the meeting place of the Winnetuxet and Raven Brook. There are traces of his canal where it crosses under the road at the Fuller place, quite near the intersection of Fuller Street and Wood Street. The scheme failed to work and the idea was dropped but the schemer wasn't allowed to forget it quite as easily, for it had been forever after known as the "Deacon's Folly." Miles Standish is reported to have reviewed the possibility of cutting a canal across Southeastern Massachusetts to avoid the long and hazardous trip outside the Cape to get to Long Island Sound and points South. His son, in fact, went so far as to become involved in a land purchasing venture with this project's completion in mind. The first action involving this town in connection with this project was recorded at a Town Meeting in our town on May 25, 1795.

This part of the waterway that was to be Halifax's share was begun just north of the present-day Halifax Beach Association reservation at the end of 11th Avenue. The course was to have cut through to where the brook crosses near the new fire station and to continue on through low swamp lands to cross South Street, a short distance south of the Carver and South Street Intersection. From here it was to have passed through the swamp to strike at the Tomson Mill Pond and then downstream to the Winnetuxet and then to the Taunton River. This link from the North River through a series of Ponds in Pembroke was the course to be followed to reach the Monponsett Ponds. The little work actually done was so insignificant that one tended to write the matter off as forgotten. This was not quite so, however. In 1909, a group of government engineers put through a survey to appraise the worthwhileness of this very plan. At the same time the route through Buzzards Bay was surveyed and this last course was ultimately the choice of what is today the Cape Cod Canal.

In 1907, the A. C. Burrage Co. brought in a very powerful dredge to Stump Pond at a point above the narrow, off Elm Street, to dig a canal from that point on a direct line along the south side of the old pond bottom to the outlet of Monponsett Pond. Elton Brown of Hanson was engineer-fireman. The purpose was to take the winding channel out of the vast open level pond bottom and to aid in the draining of the pond with the idea of building a huge tract into a cranberry bog. The dredge came by railroad to South Hanson and was then brought to Halifax on a temporary track. It was operated on an ongoing track laid at the bottom of the canal as the cut developed. This ditch was about thirty feet wide and some fifteen feet deep. The excavation was made



BANKERS TRUST COMPANY
 3 & 5 Place Vendôme
 PARIS (France)

Your kind message has been received and
 I beg you to accept the assurance of my appreciation
 of your good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Charles A. Lindbergh

"Lindy" once flew directly over Halifax. On the date of his epic trans-atlantic flight, the Halifax Grange called Paris with a congratulatory message. This was his reply.

for perhaps a half mile and then when about half completed the project was abandoned. No one seems to refer to this piece of unfinished business as "Someone's Folly," however.

One more cut or channel was made in the early 1900s. This diversion is today the good-sized ditch under the road at a point just west of the intersection of Circuit and Plymouth Streets. It is used to turn water from Stump Pond that normally goes to Robbins Pond in East Bridgewater. This run-off allows water for use at the Cape Cod Cranberry Co. bogs that lay to the south of Laurel Street and extend to Pine Street. This run-off water is controlled by a series of reservoirs and makes for the efficient flooding of the bogs as needed. The cut was a major earth moving project since, at that time, Hathaway's Hill had not yet been altered in height by road cutting. The cut was so deep here that landslides resulted in two fatalities.

Travel by land and by water has been the custom of our Halifax residents through the years. Travel through a mixture of these two elements was another thing, altogether. In the early days of my navigating the problem of mud was important, for in the spring there would be a "Mud Vacation from school." The roads were simply impassable. Through all my reading, however, I have not found a trace of complaint concerning the need to shut schools down for a "drying period."

We are not directly located in an air corridor and so most flights over us are incidental. However, about 1910, a balloon came from the southwest and settled in our midst, just off Elm Street to the Robbins Pond side. This was my first view of man in flight. There have been several more connections with the industry of flight in our town. Mention has been made of Ernie Sturtevant and his work on an airplane that never got off the ground. In recent years the lakes have become a special mecca for sea planes. There are now several men and women living in Halifax who earn their living in the air industry. My own nephew, James Baker, is a pilot and flies such planes as the "727." I expect all of Halifax's populace must say that we belong to the "Air Age," ever since Charles Lindberg flew over our heads on his trip to Paris in 1927.

The recitation of these travel stories has been pleasant for me. The modes of travel have certainly changed and a large portion of the mental effort and muscles of our bodies and the gold from our purses has been expended to "get us there" quicker. One would like to say that we get there cheaper and more directly. Still, when one considers the time wasted with fog-bound airports and diverted flights, not to mention the excruciatingly slow pace that prevails on the South-east Expressway, modern travel isn't ideal.

Travel along the varied ways of Halifax was, of course, limited in the beginning. Actually, travel from place to place was made primarily on foot over the rough paths first trod by the Indians. The clearing of fields and the establishing of farm areas brought the practice of raising animals that could be trained as beasts of burden: the oxen, dogs and, most choice of all, horses. These all came to be the chief suppliers of travel. The pioneers soon found that when faced with conditions of uneven terrain and insecure footing, the ox was easily the best choice for their needs. From the very early days up to the last

quarter of the 19th century, the yoke of oxen on the New England farm was the number one possession. It was granted that the slow, quadruped of the genus, *Bos*, could be left behind in all contests of speed, but in almost all other evaluations, this short-legged, big-barreled, horned creature was number one. In recent times, horses have come to be the most prized farm animal. They are faster. I have seen horses hitched in front of a yoke of cattle on farm work and also on occasion on road hauling projects. This was not done with the expectation of more power, but to speed up the work. For plowing, logging and other types of country work, the oxen held up their end of the deal remarkably well. With the refinement of highway surfaces and the subsequent hardening of the roads, the ox stepped aside for the more easily shod horse. The horse age, if you will, has lasted only half as long as the period when oxen were supreme. Automotive power has now come to the transportation needs for more and faster turning of the wheels and pulling the goods that industry thirsts insatiably for throughout the world. We are no longer a farm-oriented town, though it wasn't very long ago that every farm had all the tools of the trade, beasts of burden and sundry vehicles.

Perhaps no other invention of man's ingenuity has more adaptability than the wheel. But first on the scene in the clearing and settling of the land was the drag. Obviously, there were no wheels on this vehicle and it was always a crude get-up since the inventor was usually the homesteader who fashioned native materials together to make this rough sled. He would use it to move out stumps and rocks from his home site and clear a spot for his growing field. Once his plot was free and his walls of protection begun, he could go to work refining the sled or wagon to make for "smoother sailing." Stone walls came as the first fences. However, Halifax, for some reason, has few outcroppings of stone and no large formations inside town limits. A few large fieldstones arranged in walls can be seen on the "island." Plympton, Bridgewater and points generally to the southwest and west are strewn with unattached stones and ledges which cover the ground off toward the "rock" and toward New Bedford on a circle sweeping through all the territory between here and Narragansett Bay. There are exceptions and my own stone wall is another story. The foundation stones in my home were quarried on the home site or at least nearby. They were hauled to this building site on stone drags from as far away as perhaps a half mile.

Two-wheeled carts were a major step forward in two modes of transportation. Material for the carts was usually wood. It is one of my proud accomplishments that in the early years I can recall having worked on a wheelwright problem that involved repair to a wooden-axled wagon. The age of iron had come into full use by the time I was old enough to know of it, and a wooden axle and wooden hub soon became novelties. My friend, William Tillson, had a big farm rig made with wooden axles and hubs. He owned a big farm at the corner of Elm and Pond Streets and among his many interests was a steam sawmill. The equipment in the mill allowed the wooden wheels and axles to be serviced right there on the property. At any rate early in my career, I helped to set the tires on the wheels with wooden hubs that rode on wooden axles.

Four-wheeled wagons soon came into popular use. Hay rigs with racks to hold the gatherings of hay from the fields were used. With the haying season, the four-wheeled wagon would be equipped with stakes spaced around the outer



Timothy Wood house (now Randall home) on River Street. The gun slots, which are still discernible, afforded defense against Indian attack. This building is included in national listing of historic sites.



Standish Place (now the home of Albert W. Williams) on Palmer Mill Road. One of the first permanent homes in town, it is now included in the national listing of historic sites.

rails of the wagon body. When the pitched hay had covered the top of the stakes, the builder of the load would spread the subsequent forks of hay to permit the load to broaden out. Binding forks full of hay would be distributed so that the expanding load would hold together for hauling to the hungry haymows, to be stored and used to feed the livestock in the non-productive part of the year. One non-agrarian use of the haymow was that of a retreat for a boy who needed a snooze or just needed to get away from the turmoil that more ambitious minds could conjure up for him. My own collection of pitchforks and hayrakes are a precious part of my memorabilia. There are times when I watch the modern farmers doing their work with up-to-date machines, and I question the gain in expediting the job at the cost of more vigorous physical exertion and the subsequent fatigue and ensuing recuperation that the healthy body responds to with a good night's sleep.

My horse-drawn wooden sled is well over a century old and makes me take flights like these into fancy to wonder how a ride in it behind a spirited dobbin would compare to a streak through the countryside on a modern snowmobile? Come springtime, the roads that stayed passable demanded the attention of the road-scraper to fill the ruts that inevitably formed from the melting snow. Road layouts were narrow, sometimes only as wide as eight to twelve feet. Tree growth would be close to the side of the roads, making for shade and a slow thaw in spring. At any rate, the ground eventually dried up and it was back to school—the end of “mud vacation.”

Two-wheelers were the carriages used first for getting over the bumpy roads. There were many styles of two-wheeled rigs, including the racing sulkey and the fancy hitch that sometimes had a back to back arrangement.

The saw-horse buggy was the *piece-de-resistance* of my early days. This four-wheeler had a flexible spring construction that eliminated the sway factor which was sometimes conspicuous in less desirable makes of wagons. We also had a conveyance called a trap. It was a two-wheeler, too. The carry-all was the most commonplace of all conveyances of those early days. It was so commonplace, in fact, that I don't remember much about it at all. I particularly remember the “democrat wagon.” This species was a four-wheeled affair with a rectangular body. The sides and back were about eight inches high. A dasher in front and the hinged back panel were fixtures. Two portable seats in tandem were made to fit into the side panels of the body with a hooked finger-type projection that could be inserted into the holes on the tops of the side panels. There were two straight but short, projecting fingers that fell into place when the seat settled down on the top of the side rail. The democrat rates among the best conveyances that I have ever placed my body or confidence in. With both seats installed, and all aboard, a trip for the family to grandfather's house was an adventure. On the ride home after a long day of playing and feasting, father would permit us two boys to lie under the seats where we'd snooze all the way home.

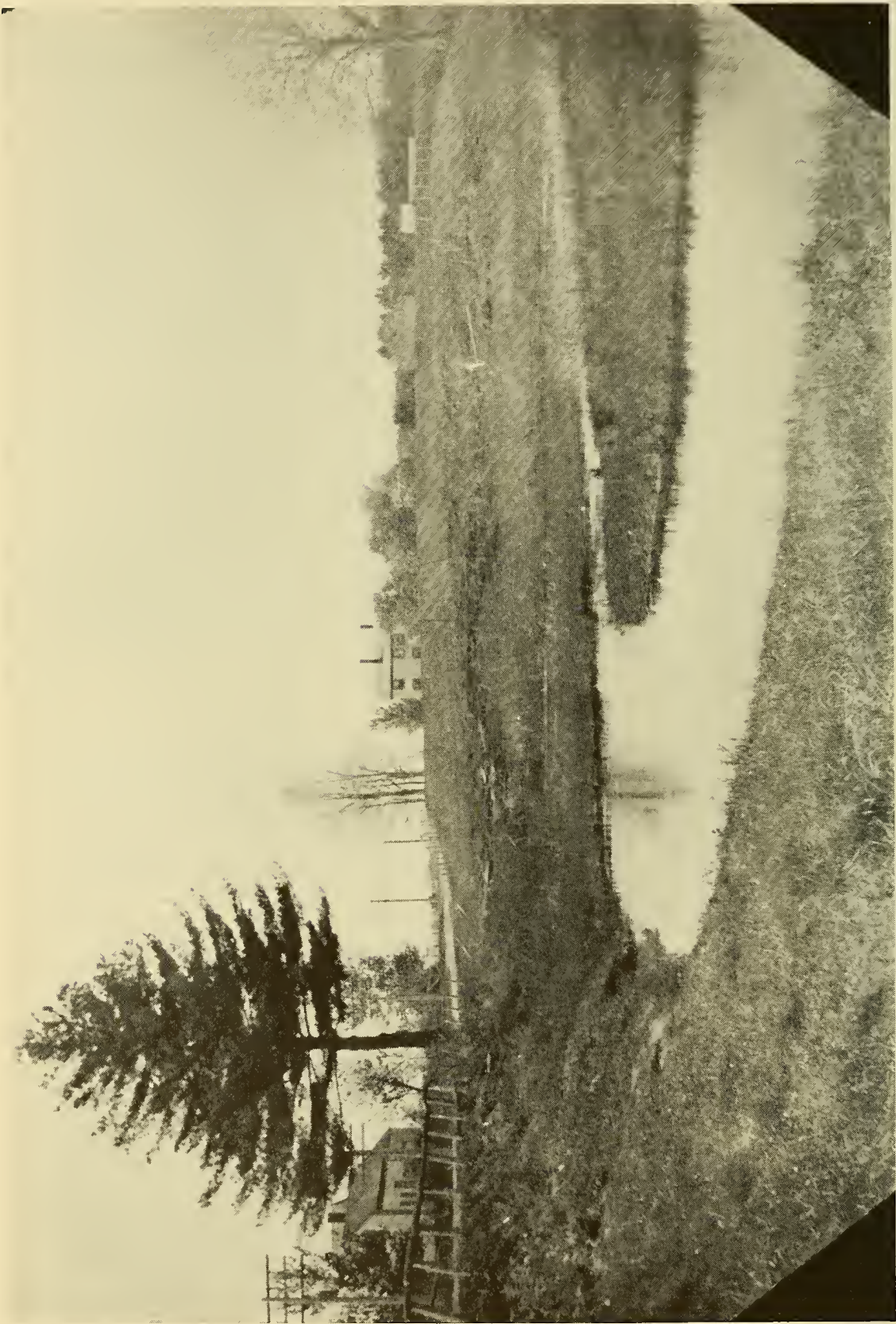
Accidents did happen in the horse and buggy days. A team or a pair of horses passing our home one summer's day came upon my brother who had wandered from the yard and deposited himself with sand pail in the middle of the road. The heavy log rig was not loaded. The driver sat on the right, his feet dangling and his horses heading home with almost no chance of meeting any obstacles.



Just about a quarter century ago in South Halifax.



Coming through Plympton Green. In this 1941 picture, Morris Robbins is shown on his way to J. B. Baker's Blacksmith Shop to have his oxen shod. This was the last time the ox frame was used.

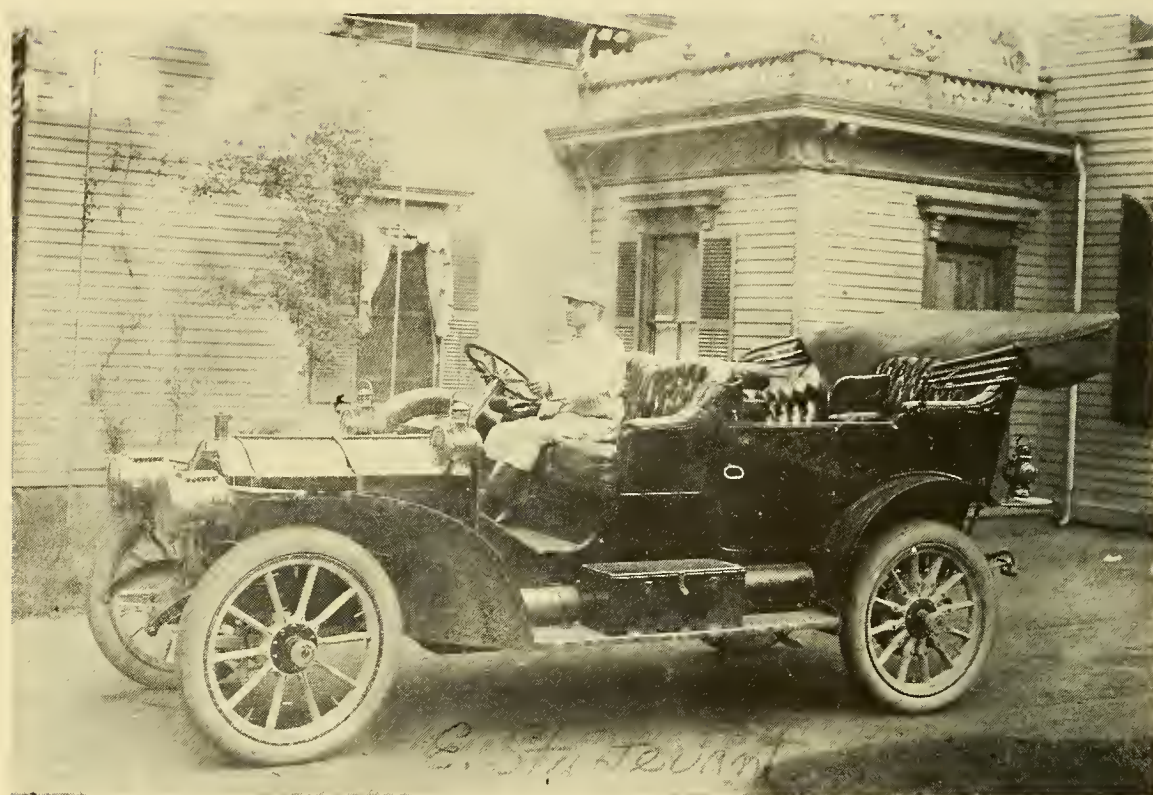


Thompson Street looking south from the Winnetuxet River — about 1900.

Suddenly a wheel went over a bump, and almost immediately, the horses stopped. The driver jumped down off the wagon to find baby Jim prostrate, his head directly in the rut that the rear wheel would next pass over. Jim was all right and the story ends happily. I remember another incident involving an accident where the wagon ran over a child and caused his death. Mrs. Alexander Pope was thrown from her carriage and suffered a broken arm. I helped Dr. Will Hunt when he attended my friend Bill Robinson, who fell from a wagon-load of hay and broke his hip. I, myself, suffered a severe wound when a pitchfork thrust up with a fork full of hay by my neighbor Mike Bishop hit my knee, as mentioned before. The scar has long since faded away. As much as one who lived in the days before the "gas buggies" might wish to shun the subject, still it can't be completely avoided, and so I confess that I have stashed away a hand-made wooden pung made by O. B. Perry some 130 years ago. I have odds and ends of wagons and harnesses and one complete carriage quite like a "democrat wagon." A hitching weight is one of my proud possessions. It is my choice doorstep.

Through the years, horses have always been in big demand. The supply has never been sufficient to meet the call for work horses, driving horses, riding horses and now race horses. The reality of life is that things in demand bring "good" money. So horse thieves prospered. The villains have plied their trade in this area as well. Wagons were registered and rated according to the width of the tire on the wheel. The assumption was that the wider the tire the heavier the load and so the heavier the tax or levy to be used for road upkeep. If one didn't care to pay a tax he could ignore the roadways and equip his nag with "mud-boots" to cut through swamps and marshes. If he chose to use the roads, however, he had to have a license. In the light of all the regulations and the length of time they have been controlling what people do, I feel extremely fortunate to have kept my auto license for sixty-three uninterrupted years.

The first automobile to run on Halifax roads was owned by Dr. O. W. Charles of Bryantville. Actually he belonged to the entire countryside thereabouts, including the Town of Halifax. Perhaps it was providential that he was the first to have had an auto since he was out in all kinds of weather and at all times. He delivered me in mid-December, however, long before the advent of the "gas-wagon" and my father met his debt for the doctor's services by delivering a new sleigh to the doctor that winter. In his many years of straddling ruts and splashing through puddles, the doctor must have grown to know the road to our house quite well. Perhaps his perfect record of always getting to his cases was due to his moderate pace and attention to business. It was not an easy matter to rile up his speed pattern. Once, mother was shocked to unconsciousness by a bolt of lightning that passed from the telephone on the wall to an iron stove some nine feet away. Because the bolt of lightning put the phone out of order I went to summon the doctor by automobile. By this time we had an auto and I drove it to get the doctor. I remember I approached a small group of men working in the middle of the road in the neighborhood of Ocean Avenue and Monponsett Street. I left the road and made a wide berth around them for they were working near a telephone pole. Everyone involved testifies that my course around the group was a bit wider and faster than seemed necessary. I reached



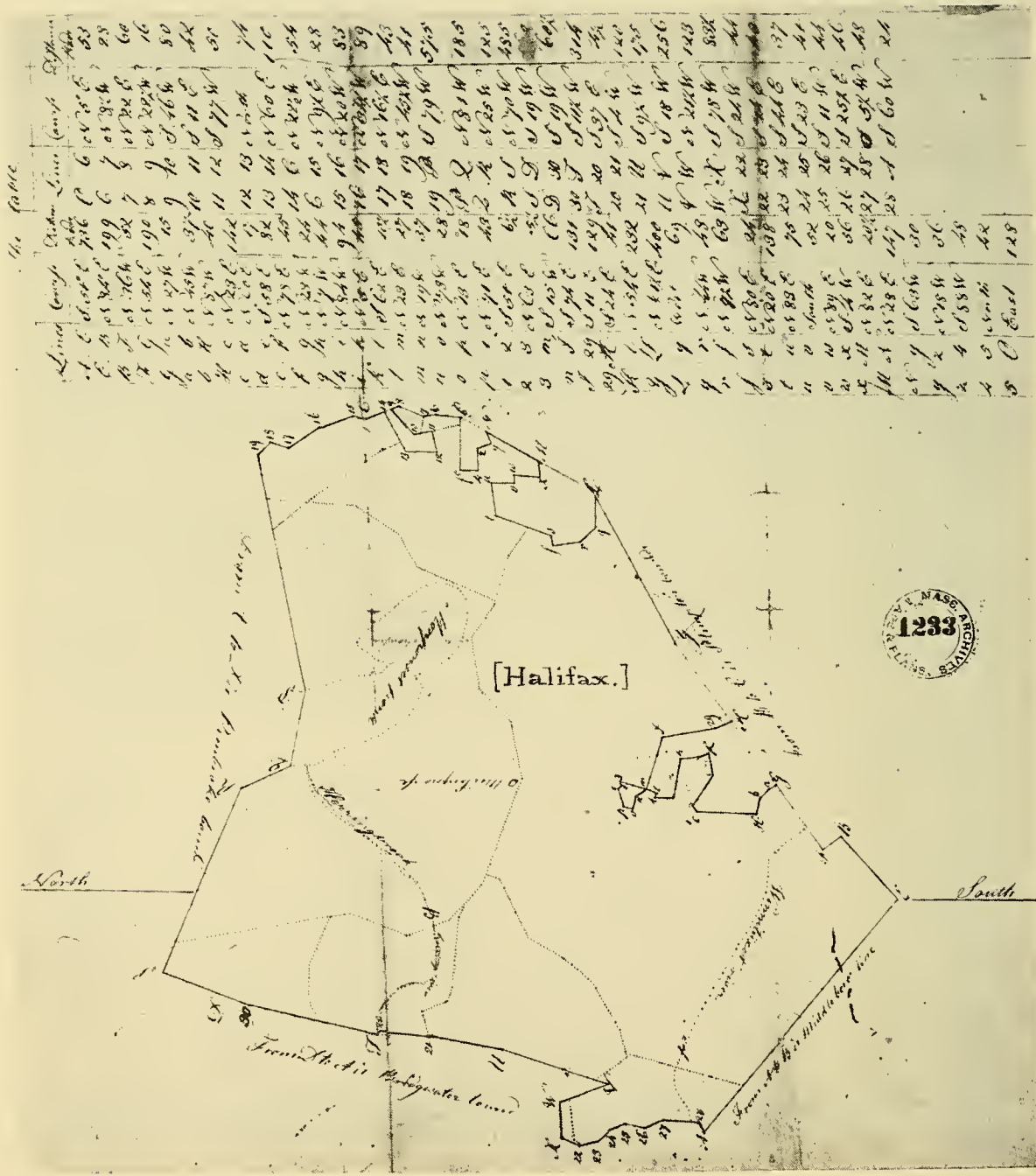
Chauffeur Ernest Sturtevant is shown at his home on Hemlock Lane in one of the first automobiles in Halifax. He drove for L. Q. White, shoe manufacturer from Brockton.

the doctor's office safely. The doctor thought better of my offer to drive him to mother's aid and he suggested that I follow him to our house. He started and I started and I got there first with "no harm done," but ever after hated thunderstorms.

The next automobile that came to our town was the one driven by Ernie Sturtevant as chauffeur for L. Q. White. Homer Tillson also became a chauffeur at this time as did Ally Angus. They would occasionally drive their cars back to our town to permit short visits with the families of these young men. A choice picture in my collection is of Ernest sitting in his livery at the wheel of the motorcar. An illustration of the picture is included in this volume. Marcus Urann owned a Stanley Steamer. He could "put her around" the corner of Pine and Circuit Streets and cause a cascade of sand to rise higher and float farther out over the countryside than anything I've ever seen since. And so, the automobile began to make itself felt and heard in Halifax.

It is the consensus of a large part of the informed world that the Indian has been on this continent 20,000 years. With his moccasin-covered feet he wore grooves called trails. In the last 400 years we have all but obliterated those trails with planted strips of cement or asphalt that, in comparison, make the Roman roads seem like cobble-stone streets. Trails went, and so roads may go. What next?

Travel we have had and red men and white men have now put their feet down on almost every square inch of America. And, in participation in this exploration, many of the world's creatures have come to leave footprints on Halifax's soil. A circus troop put through here about 1915 with its contingent of unusual four-leggers not germane to our country. Who would think that I would ride an elephant on Plymouth Street in Halifax? Oxen, yes; donkeys, yes; but an elephant? We also had the Chase Wild Animal Farm. Now there is snowmobiling or waterskiing, scooterbiking and snowskiing. Not all will be lost if we remain developed enough to push the peddle that feeds the juice into our gas machines that keep us in transit. The traffic is terrible, air is spoiled, water is polluted and all that's left is to burrow into a hillside with an air filter in charge at the entrance. Then, I suppose, one smart woodchuck hunter will try to "smoke us out" even as I have done to drive out the poor little creatures that taste like chicken meat when properly poached.



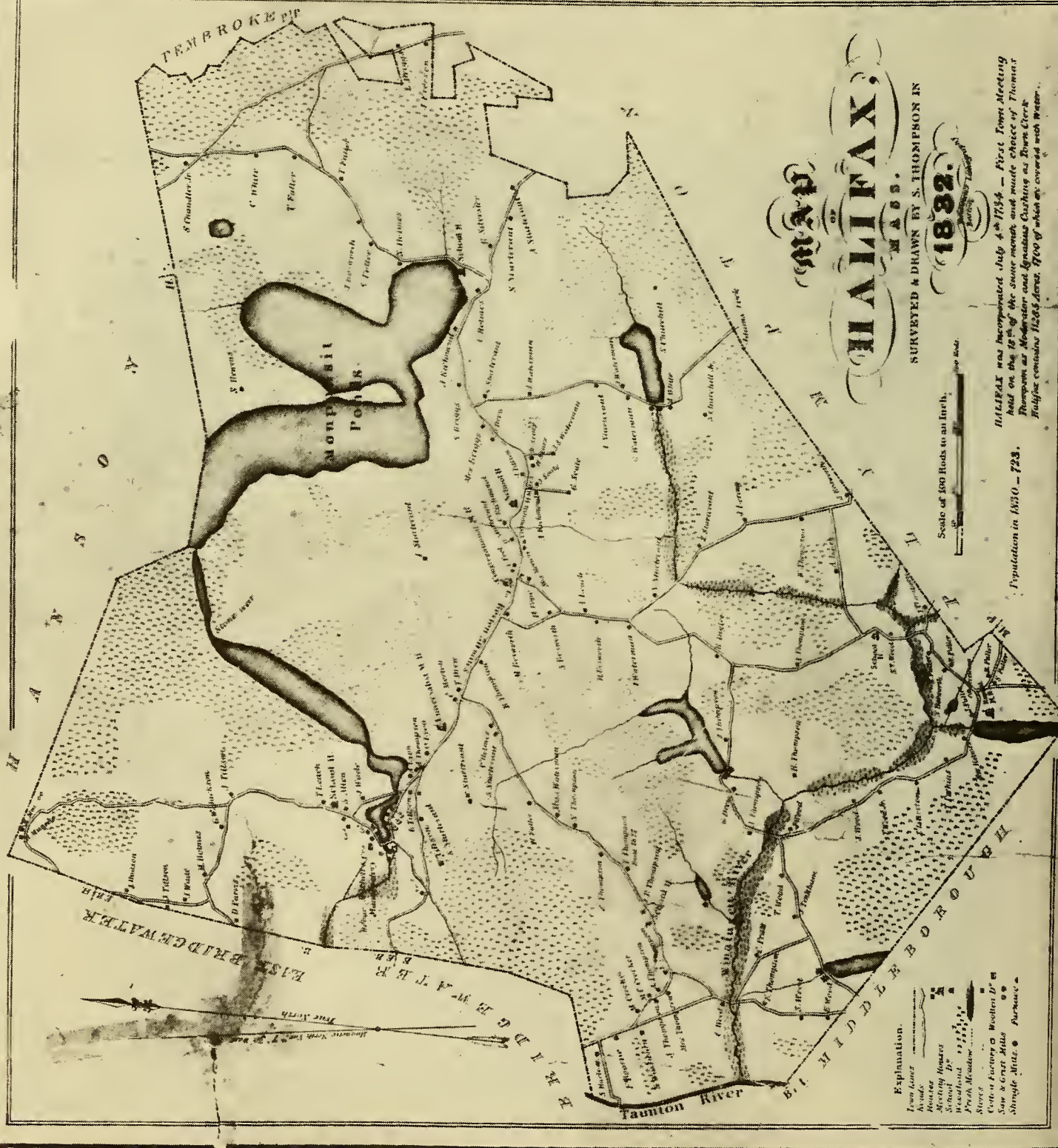
Map of Halifax, as it appeared in 1734. It is one of the oldest known maps of the town.

MAPS

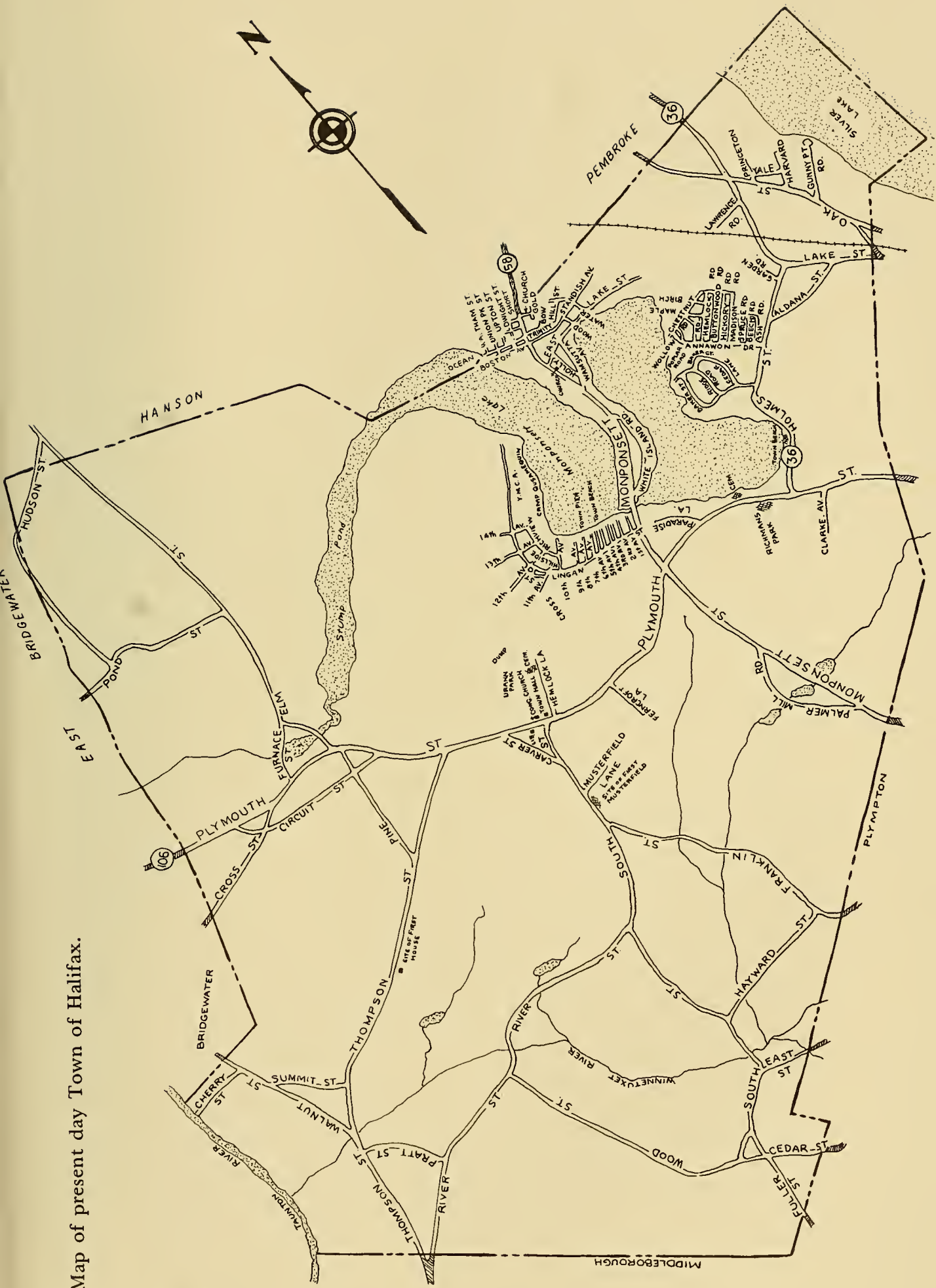
The very nature of a map lends a degree of credence to the information taken from it if only for the fact that the effort in its making requires a degree of planning. In addition, some knowledge and interest is generally implied when such an activity is undertaken. It is, of course, reassuring if a trained individual such as a surveyor or, today, a civil engineer does the work. The local school teacher with his better than average knowledge of mathematics usually surveyed for the earlier maps. This same person almost always did the recording work at the Registry of Deeds for everyone else in the community. The Latham Bros. of East Bridgewater, Massachusetts were the principal surveyors of this area. Their map collection, which is kept in the Registry of Deeds, is the finest source of local information in existence concerning properties and sections of towns and other interests such as water rights, etc., that go back many years. I never fail to direct at least a small amount of attention to the collection every time I do get to the Registry. Sources of material such as this are limited. Neglect and indifference to the old, dilapidated-looking piles of papers—like those which usually come to light when old properties change hands—too often go to the dump. Things are changing, however, and searchers are looking more carefully for “finds.” In the last dozen or so years there has been a steady, albeit thin, trickle of such materials (usually shedding some valuable light on our past) coming to me as Town Historian.

The oldest map I have was drawn at the time of the setting off of Halifax from Plympton in 1734. This map has the Meeting House location in barely legible form. The key is done with the alphabet from A to G. It includes an outline of “Plimton” with the “Plimton Old Meeting House (F)” set at a definite location. The Halifax portion carries definite markings that can be recognized, such as our border on Silver Lake, our point of contact with the Great or Taunton River, etc. But, more especially, it places the “New Meeting House” at a distinct location on the map. I have studied this map and its indistinct key for hours and am so infatuated with it that I am including a patched-up illustration of it which may or may not be helpful. This 1733-34 map was drawn by Ebenezer Byram, Surveyor. He did the surveying and the plotting at the request of the “Petitioners of the sundry inhabitants of the adjacent part of Plympton, Middleborough and Pembroke petitioning for a township. Jan. 7, 1734.” In general, the map shows the ultimate bounds of our town.

My 1832 map of the town was surveyed and plotted by Samuel Thompson. He was the regular schoolmaster of the town and, as stated, did the necessary



Map of present day Town of Halifax.



surveying for his neighbors. As you may have noted, 1832 was at the approximate end of the first century of the town's official existence. These maps were ordered by a vote of the town and the town clerk was directed to issue one to every young man upon his reaching the age of "majority" (21). The next map in my possession, taken in chronological order, is dated 1857. Next, I have a map of 1871. Then there is the map of 1879 which is the clearest and the easiest to relate to our times. This map is from the *Plymouth County Atlas* which was issued that same year. There is a large old map of Plymouth County in the Cobb Library in Bryantville. On this map, as in a few other cases, the buildings are designated and named. Although this practice was common in early maps, with the increase in population and the filling in of roads and homes, it is impossible to continue the practice. In this connection, it is noted that whenever one sees the identifying location of his own "Old Home" on an old map, he feels reassured and proud of his special status. And, I may add, he has probably paid well for the privilege if he purchased his home in these highly inflated years. Another satisfaction in the study of these old maps is to have a visual conviction of where some interesting buildings once stood but left no evidence for us late-comers to recognize. And then, too, there are some landmarks that still need to be pointed out to our young folk or newcomers. As Town Historian, I frequently have occasion to point out such places of interest and I certainly like to refer to a map to corroborate such evidence. Invariably, if one buys an old home, he or she comes to me to help establish its age. It isn't easy since deeds carry no details concerning the age of the home, the date of construction, etc. By locating the placement of the house on a map of earlier time and setting, and its non-inclusion on a map of an even earlier date, we can establish a house's age. This is known as the "Bracketing Method." The closer maps are to each other in time, the closer we come to dating a home. I have recently come upon a Halifax map of 1859.

Among the many Halifax maps I am familiar with are several geodetic maps which show the elevations of the town. One of these maps shows the town of Halifax to be ninety feet above sea level at its highest point and fourteen feet at its lowest. They are respectively at a point on the steps of the town hall and at a point in the bed of the Winnetuxet River just east of the Thompson Bridges on Thompson Street. While on the subject of geography let me add that the 42nd parallel runs through a small island located between the lakes, called White's Island. The height of the water tolerated at Monponsett is fifty-six feet. Also, the platform covering the open well at Zillah Bryant's place on Old Plymouth Street, which is also my birthplace, is exactly eighty-four feet above sea level. As a young man, I worked for Michael Roache's construction firm which did much of the pavement work in this area. I spent much of my time working with Eddie Coleman, the civil engineer of the company, digging drainage systems, gradings, easements, etc. for the roads in this town. It furnished me with a knowledge of the topographical features of this section which otherwise I may have missed. Three-quarters of a century of living on this soil and any opportunities I have had to learn the "lay of the land" in Halifax make me feel as though I know the place rather well and have it well-mapped in my mind.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Town Moderators (1900-1976)

Jessie H. Jones	James W. Fox
Ines E. Tickiob	Charles E. Merrill
Fred Simpson	David S. Hamilton
James T. Thomas	John J. Rock
James W. H. Baker	T. P. Elliott-Smith
Rev. Warren H. Leonard	

APPENDIX II

Town Clerks

(List Taken From Beginning of Town Reports, 1859)

Edwin Inglee	George A. Estes
Andrew Richmond	Nathaniel S. Guptill
Thomas D. Morton	Doris F. Hoinghaus
Nathaniel Morton	Margaret J. Kilroy
Morton S. Thompson	Ruth D. Perkins
Ruth V. Perkins	

APPENDIX III

*Town Selectmen**(List Taken From the Beginning of Town Reports, 1859)*

Charles H. Paine	William B. Wood
Edwin Inglee	Jared B. Baker
Elbridge Morton	Ralph B. Atwood
Abram Bourne	Clarence E. Devitt
Ephriam Thompson	Edwin H. Dutton
Asaph F. Wood	Nathaniel S. Guptill
James T. Drew	Charles A. Blackman
Nathaniel Morton	William W. Burroughs
Martin Howland	Edward A. Lincoln
Harrison D. Packard	Charles M. Eaton
Van Buren Grover	Charles A. Donati
Frank W. Lyon	Albert E. Kiernan
Sylvanus Bourne	Albert Crompton
Jabez P. Thompson	Thomas E. McDonald
Cephas Washburn	Albert F. Brown
Thomas D. Morton	Guy S. Baker
George W. Sturtevant	Charles E. Merrill
George H. Hayward	Francis E. Devlin
Fred Simpson	Roland E. Minott
Henry M. Bosworth	Russell I. Sturtevant
Edwin H. Vaughan	Richard E. Moore
Bradford B. Waterman	John J. Rock
George A. Estes	Richard Shire

Albert Bergman

APPENDIX IV

*Halifax School Committee**(List Taken From Beginning of Town Reports, 1859)*

Nathaniel Morton	Joseph E. Watson
Samuel Churchill	Mary J. Schindler
Ira Sturtevant	Edith E. Schweitzer
Cordelia J. Richmond	Ralph B. Atwood
Charles H. Paine	Roland H. Minott
Harrison D. Packard	George Holzworth Sr.
George H. Watson	Russell I Sturtevant
James T. Thomas	Oscar Gasset
Morton Thompson	J. Robert Baker
Mrs. Sarah E. Paine	James Fox
Miss Nellie M. Pope	Marion E. Stoddard
George W. Hayward	Beatrice N. Binns
George A. Parker	John Duffy, Jr.
Mrs. Nellie Thompson	Mary Moore
Samuel W. Gay	Anna N. Sturtevant
Otis Pratt	Scott K. Smith
George W. Sturtevant	Margaret C. Meyer
Arthur Sturtevant	Howard L. Waterman Jr.
E. Laurence Grover	Charles F. Batchelder III
William B. Wood	Margaret T. Fitzgerald
Jabez P. Thompson	Pauline Anderson
George A. Estes	Mary Reid
Ella F. Baker	Thomas F. Weathers
Fred Simpson	Merle D. Ott
David M. Briggs	William Borhek
Frank E. Houghton	T. P. Elliott-Smith
Frank D. Lyon	Robert Deegan
Miriam Tillson	Marguerite S. Hammond
Bernice G. Remick	D. Joan Rose
Lloyd Morton	Ronald P. Gerhart
Myra Rogers	Sandra L. Daly
Irene G. Harding	Robert E. Bergman

Silver Lake Regional School Committee

Richard C. Sturtevant

Brendan I. Dalton

Henry D. Hammond, Jr.

Thomas F. Weathers

Edward A. Uburtis

Charles Kozlowski

Henry B. Belcher, Sr.

APPENDIX V

*Road Commissioner and Superintendent of Streets—Highway Surveyor**(List Taken From Beginning of Town Reports, 1859)*

Charles Paine

Bradford B. Waterman

Jabez P. Thompson

William T. Hayward

Lysander W. Hayward

Herbert B. Ramsdell

Roland H. Minott

Gilbert C. Thompson

Irving C. Minott

Franklin Dias

Ceasar Martin

Ralph E. Hayward, Jr.

APPENDIX VI

*Tree Warden**(Beginning 1913)*

Herbert B. Randall

F. Russell Bonney

John A. Wood

Roland H. Minott

William Edgar

George H. Armstrong

Albert A. Thomas

Myron G. Wood

APPENDIX VII

Assessors
(Since 1890)

Jabez P. Thompson
Sylvanus Bourne
Edwin H. Vaughan
B. B. Waterman
David M. Briggs
Gilbert C. Thompson
E. Laurence Grover
George A. Estes
J. Homer Tillson
Clyde O. Bosworth

Ralph B. Atwood
Robert F. Schindler
George L. McCormack
Albert Bergman
Millard H. Thomas
Francis E. Devlin
Henry J. Kunkel
Donald H. Randall
Alberico Gentile
William D. Perkins

APPENDIX VIII

Park Commissioners
(Beginning 1914)

Frank E. Chaffin
Frank Waterman
Frank D. Lyon
E. Laurence Grover
William L. Robertson
Gilbert C. Thompson
Benjamin Thrasher
George H. Armstrong
Orrill C. Cole
Clyde O. Bosworth
Roland H. Minott
Harry H. Brown

Amos H. Wood Jr.
Wayland F. Chace
Myron G. Wood
Frederick M. Harndon
Albert F. Brown
J. Robert Baker
Clyde O. Bosworth Jr.
Frank N. Devereux
Margaret Dobrowsky
Kathleen C. Kilroy
Maureen Thomson
Grace A. Rudolph

APPENDIX IX

*Treasurers**(In This Century)*

Jabez P. Thompson
Nathaniel S. Guptill
Doris F. Hoinghaus

Margaret J. Kilroy
Ruth D. Perkins
Ruth V. Perkins

APPENDIX X

*Tax Collectors**(In This Century)*

Jabez P. Thompson
Edwin H. Dutton
Richard A. Blackman

Ruth B. Blackman
Phyllis J. Denault
Elaine A. Barie

APPENDIX XI

*Finance Committee**(Elected From 1941 Until 1962)*

W. Stanley Brown
Robert F. Schindler
Wyman H. Briggs
Charles E. McCarthy
Russell I. Sturtevant
Joseph E. Watson

Harold I. Barnes
Roland F. DeConto
Edmund L. Klimas
John A. Mullen
Cesare Gentile
Richard E. Moore

APPENDIX XII

*Planning Board**(Beginning 1945)*

Theodore I. Hall
Laurence W. Grover
Wyman H. Briggs
Edward A. Lincoln
Robert F. Schindler
Karl Burgess
Henry C. Rothenhafer
Ralph Binns 3rd
Alfred G. Lunn Jr.
Donald H. Randall
Raymond E. Tropp
O. Howard Worsham
Harry H. Brown

John M. McCormick
Jared J. Baker
Robert M. Cunningham
Kenneth D. Stowell
Howard L. Waterman Jr.
Warren Foster
George J. Cavicchi
Roger Sturtevant
Donald H. Randall Jr.
John Duffy Jr.
Maureen E. Rogers
Edward W. Hobbs Jr.
John A. McPhillips

APPENDIX XIII

*Board of Health**(Beginning 1959)*

Margaret M. McCormick
Carmen E. Scrow
Joseph E. Watson
Jared P. Woodall
William Curran
Howard L. Waterman
James P. Edney

Franklin Dias
Glenn D. Perry D.M.D.
Oscar E. Risberg
Richard H. Harrison
Albert Crompton
Kathleen O'Brien
Judith Clark

APPENDIX XIV

*Board of Public Welfare**(Beginning 1941)*

Clarence E. Devitt
George H. Armstrong
Irving Fahrenholt
Lucy E. Harlow
Rufus O. Case
Charles E. McCarthy

Paul F. Sturtevant
Mabel B. Hammond
Henry D. Hammond Sr.
Robert W. Bartlett
Albert Bergman
Raymond Forsstrom

APPENDIX XV

*Water Commissioners**(From 1950)*

Robert E. Keough
Ernest J. Rioux
Bernard Sandborn
Daniel O. Bosworth
Robert F. Woodbury Sr.
Albert F. Brown
J. Gilbert Miller
Daniel J. Clark

Francis E. Valentine
James V. Murphy Jr.
Edwin M. Hayward
Robert F. Schindler
Charles E. Merrill
Harry L. Brown
Harry L. Armstrong
Edward G. Zahn

APPENDIX XVI

*Library Trustees**(Elected from 1958)*

Anna L. Devitt
Beatrice N. Binns
Dorothy E. Briggs
Thomas E. McDonald
Guy S. Baker
Annie M. Heinonen
Melvina Thomas

Jean M. Rock
Anita Batchelder
Julia Devereux
Ruth V. Perkins
Robert Hodge
Maria Burke
Edward W. Hobbs Jr.

Thelma G. Clark

APPENDIX XVII

Constables

William Robertson
Nathaniel S. Wood
Robert S. Schindler
E. Laurence Grover
Chester W. Waterman
Wellington W. Holmes
F. Russell Bonney
Albert A. Thomas
John S. Colby

Charles Donati
Irving C. Minott
Orile C. Cole
Elvin Wood
George A. Braddock
Howard A. Waterman
Leo Hinchey
Richard A. Bell
Lewis Baker

APPENDIX XVIII

*The Fourth In Halifax**(From 1867 Middleborough Gazette)*

Independence was celebrated at Halifax in the most appropriate manner, the main feature being the dedication of the Soldier's Monument.—The line of procession was taken up at ten o'clock, at the Town House, with E. B. Thompson, Marshal; Nathaniel Morton, Ezra P. Pope, Morton Thompson, and Nelson H. Fuller, Assistant Marshals, and in the following order:

Stetson's Weymouth Band,
Co. A., Third Regt, Mass. V. M., as escort,
Orator of the Day,
Invited guests,
Town Officers,
Surviving Veterans of 1812, of the Halifax
Light Infantry,
Citizens of the Town who served in putting
down the Rebellion,
Public Schools,
Citizens

At the grove owned by Dr. Morton, prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Fobes, and an eloquent oration was given by Judge Thomas Russell, in which he traced the history of our nation and gave a minute and thrilling account of the Halifax soldiers in the late war.—Immediately after the oration, the Judge went through by express teams and trains to Lowell, where he had similar engagements.

The procession was then re-formed and marched to the Monument, where prayer was offered, and a dirge was played by the band. From thence the procession proceeded to the large tent near the Town House, where after a blessing by Rev. Mr. Humphrey, of Plymouth, a bountiful dinner was enjoyed.

After dinner, the President of the day, C. H. Paine Esq. said: As our theme to day has been war, we propose to introduce to you some relics left us by that goddess. Allusion was then made to the old Thompson gun, pistol and sword which were exhibited. The heroes who fought under Washington are gone, but a little remnant of the stalwart men who "marched over South Boston Bridge," and held themselves in readiness to fight for the freedom of the ocean, is still left us, but the "tall captain" has recently gone to his rest. God has spared to us a small band of those who stood between us and rebellion and made it possible

for us to stand to day under a free constitution. Let us remember the living as well as the dead.

After the band had played the Star Spangled Banner, the following toasts were given:—

“The Citizen Soldiers of our Republic whose valor saved the nation and whose work will regenerate the world.” Responded to by Hon. C. G. Davis, who adopted fully the sentiment just proposed, declaring that our heroes builded better than they knew. Before the war, civilization in this country was upon the wrong track, rushing down a precipice to destruction. He drew a thrilling picture of his feelings on the morning when hostilities commenced, and he met the Halifax company in Boston, on its way to the front, and closed by reading the following poem written for the occasion, by a friend:

’Twas in the darkness of the war,
When our hero brothers left
Their hearts and homes so dear to them,
Alas! how soon bereft.

They gave their precious blood for us,
That we might all be free,
And shed upon our favored land,
The light of liberty.

So long as time rolls on its course,
And bears us on its way,
The glory of their sacrifice
Will know of no decay.

Whene’r we see this sacred stone,
Reared to those braves! today,
Led each one say unto himself,
I will be true as they.

Where’er the path of duty leads,
Where’er she points the way,
I will buckle on my armor,
I will be brave as they.

Yes, brothers, on this sacred day
We pledge ourselves anew,
To keep unsullied to the last,
The trust received from you.

“The Loyal Press,” brought to his feet Bro. Andrews of the Plymouth Rock and Memorial.

“God the Author and Preserver of Liberty” was responded to by Rev. Mr. Humphrey.

“The National Sacrifice—Its results,” Dr. E. H. Cornish of Boston, replying made a happy speech. The brief abstract of these speeches that we had prepared, we are obliged to omit, for lack of time.

The dinner which was most excellent—was prepared by the Ladies of the

Monumental Society. Arrangements had been made for 513 guests. During the day, ice cream confectionery and refreshments were sold for the benefit of the association, at the Town Hall.

The Monument

Located on the green, and enclosed by an iron fence of beautiful design was of course the central attraction.—It was furnished by the Quincy Granite Company, at a cost of \$1,000. The base is four feet square, the second section three feet square, and the shaft twenty-eight inches square at the base, and sixteen at the top, with a total height of twenty feet. The lettering is all on the north side. On a raised shield are the words “Our Patriot Soldiers, 1867.” Beneath is a bronze plate with the names of the twenty-four men lost from Halifax, as follows, though not in the same order we have given them here:—

Martin S. Morse, James D. Fuller, Z. L. P. Britton, Wm. H. Fuller, Frederick E. Fuller, Horatio W. Cornish, Herbert P. Bosworth, John Wood, B.-F. Durgin, Edward Bishop, Nath'l B. Bishop, Lewis S. Wade, Edward A. Richmond, Joseph S. W. Richmond, Charles W. Soule, Lorenzo A. Tower, James A. Lyon, Joseph L. Melton, Joseph T. Bourne, Abel T. Bryant, Oliver E. Bryant, George Drew, 3rd, Cyrus Thompson, Luther Hayward.

INDEX

- Academy, Halifax, 51
 American Legion, 72, 83
 Anderson, Anson, 97, 123
 Angus, Ally, 165
 Angus, Hubert A., 91
 Angus, Marion, 70
 Animal Farm, 97, 167
 Armstrong, G. H., 42
 Armstrong, Myrtle, 116
 Atwood, Hazel, 56, 100
 Atwood, Ralph, 100
- Bailey's Barge, 69
 Baker, Miss A., 41
 Baker, Ella, 69
 Baker, Guy, 42
 Baker, Mrs. Guy, 99
 Baker, Jared B., 69, 72, 97, 117
 Baker, Robert, 153
 Bartlett Brook, 151
 Bartlett, "Minute Man," 131
 Beaches
 Annawon Drive, 102
 Eleventh Avenue, 102
 Holmes, 102
 Town, 102
 Wamsutta, 107
 Bears, James, 28
 Bearse, John, 24
 Benevolent Society, 65, 69
 Bicycle Shop, 84
 Billings, Lewis, 64
 Bishop, M., 140, 165
 Blackman, Richard, 97
 Blacksmith Shop, 75, 82, 83, 117
 Bonney, Russ & Linda, 110, 123
 Bos'ard, Augustus, 51
 Bos'ard, Cap'n, 45, 47, 48
 Bosworth, Clyde Otis, 42
 Bosworth, David, 18, 23, 24, 114
 Bosworth, Henry M., 55, 153
 Bosworth, Mrs. H. M., 62
 Bosworth, Marcus, 54
 Bosworth, Martin, 121, 151, 153
 Bosworth, Nehemiah, 37
 Bosworth, Richard, 38, 55
 Bosworth, Ruth, 37
 Bosworth Tavern (Ordinary Inn), 72, 110, 121, 151
- Bourne, Lester, 114
 Bourne, Sylvanus, 62
 Boutemain, John, 73
 Boy Scouts of Halifax, 62, 114
 Bradford, "Minute Man," 131
 Bricknell, Anne L., 42
 Bricknell, Clayton A., 42
 Bridges
 Childs, 77, 150
 Fuller, 37
 Hathaway, 150
 Herring Brook, 150
 Monponsett, 150, 151
 Raven, 157
 Thompson, 150, 171
 Bridgewater Trail, 127, 149
 Briggs, David, 62
 Briggs, Ephraim, 37
 Briggs, John, 23, 27
 Briggs, Lewis, 40
 Briggs, Martha, 53
 Brown, Violet, 72, 100
 Bryam, Ebenezer, 169
 Bryant, B., 63
 Bryant, Frank, 63
 Bryant, John, 25
 Bryant, Zillah, 171
 Buckley, Mary, 73
 Bullfrog Creek, 90
 Bunker, William, 97
 Burrage Cranberry Co., 89, 90, 113, 114, 157
- Canals, 157
 Cape Cod Cranberry Co., 89, 113
 Car Wash, 83
 Case, Rufus, 97, 123
 Cedar Swamp, "Great," 75, 157
 Cemeteries, 85
 Central, 75
 East, 101, 149
 Thompson, 75
 Centennial Party, 67
 Centrella, Al & Rose, 110
 Charles, Dr. O. W., 92, 165
 Chase, Charles, 99
Children of Park's Tavern, The, 54, 100
 Church, Catholic, 110
 Church of Christ (Congregational), 25, 99, 101

- buildings, 29, 30
- library, 55
- membership (1734), 25, 26
- Church, Major, 107
- Churchill, Edmund, 63, 103, 155
- Churchill, Samuel, 29
- Cimorelli, Elena Gentile, 110
- Cianfarani, Benjamin, 110, 150
- Civil War Monument, 30, 141
- Clairmont, Jeffrey L., 72
- Clam House, 110
- Clark & Wilson, 110
- Cobb, Ebenezer, 23
- Cobb Library, 57, 161
- Cobb, Rozilla, 57
- Coleman, Eddie, 171
- Cole, Orville, 89
- Cook, Charles, 101, 107, 116
- Corkum Transportation Co., 110
- Cotton, John, 24, 26, 27, 28, 35
- Cotton Mill, 85
- Country Club, 72, 100
- Croade, Thomas, 25, 26, 27, 29, 97, 121, 155
- Crooker, Mary, 65, 67
- Crooker, Melvin, 81
- Crosby, Mrs. William, 128
- Cumberland Farms, 84, 114
- Cushing, Ignatius, 17, 23, 25
- Cushing, Noah, 27, 29
- Cushman, David, 150
- Damon, Henry S., 113
- Darling, Emma, 41
- Deanne, Eugene J., 42
- Dennet, Esther, 64
- Depot, Halifax, 38, 40
- DeSilva, Paul, 104
- DesRosiers, Alfred, 107
- Devitt, Clarence, 42, 97
- Dewhurst, Herman, 42
- Dias, Frank, 82
- Division Club, the, 61, 62
- Donati, Charles, 82
- Donnelly Farm, 84
- Drew, Cosh, 63
- Drew, George, 136
- Drew, Job, 116
- Drew, John, 23
- Drew, Thomas, 130, 133
- Duffy, John, 83, 97
- Dunbar, Jesse, 132
- Dunbar Inn, 72, 131
- Eddy, Obediah, 132, 133
- Edgar, Andrena, 73
- Edwards, Robert M., 97, 119
- Ellis, Benjamin, 150
- Estes, Albion, 97
- Estes, G. A., 97, 121
- Estes, George W., 110
- Farmers Club, 61, 62, 100
- Farmhouse Gift Shop, 97
- Fire Department, 72, 81, 94
- Fire Station, 61, 100
- Fire Truck, 96
- First Church Book, 25
- First Covenant, 25
- First Meeting House, 16, 17
- Forsstrom, Anne, 56
- Franklin, Annette L., 42
- Fuller, A., 63
- Fuller, Ebenezer, 18, 25, 28, 157
- Fuller, Eldridge, 38
- Fuller Mill, 94
- Fuller, Noah, 132
- Fuller, Samuel, 150
- Furnace Street, 94
- Furnaces, 87, 89
- Garages in Halifax
 - Bob's, 83
 - Bosworth's, 83
 - Estes', 83
 - Farmers, 83, 97
 - Hammond's, 83
 - Hank's, 124
 - Merrill's, 83
 - Sturtevant's, 83, 100
- Gasset, Inez, 56
- Gasset, Oscar, 81, 97
- Gentile, Alberico, 123
- Gentile, Cesare, Jr., 123
- Gentile, Cesare, Sr., 123
- Gentile, Grace, 123
- Gentile's Supermarket, 97
- Good Templars, 61, 62
- Governor's Crossing, 90
- Grange, 63, 69, 70
- Grasshopper cannon, 136
- Gravestone factory, 75
- Great River, 155
- Grover, E. Laurence, 55
- Grover, Van Buren, 62, 100, 113
- Gummow, Henry, 114
- Halifax Dramatic Society, 62
- Halifax Garden Co., 103, 113
- Halifax Light Infantry, 136
- Hammond, Henry, 124
- Hammond, Mabel, 124
- Hancock, John, 61
- Harden, Nathaniel, 149
- Harding, Harry, 97

- Harlow, Eliot, 42
 Harlow, George, 134
 Harlow, Lucy, 135
 Harris, Benjamin W., 38
 Harris, Judge Robert O., 121
 Harrison, Richard, 99
 Hathaway Hill, 73, 77
 Hay scales, 121
 Hayward, Clifford, 82
 Hayward, George, 114
 Hayward, Ralph, 100
 Hayward, Ralph E., Jr., 82
 Hayward, W. T., 62
 Hayward's Liquor Store, 100
 Haywood, Lysander, 42, 123
 Henrich, Edward G., 123
 Henrich, Lawrence, 100
 Herring River, 75, 85, 87, 149, 150
 Highway Department, 82
 Historical Society, 64, 97
 Hobomocks, 8
 Hoinghaus, Doris, 8, 99
 Hollis, Mrs. Alton, 153
 Hollis, William, 92
 Holmes, Abbie, 63
 Holmes, Ebenezer, 42
 Holmes, Dr. Howland, 55, 56, 59
 Holmes, John, 55
 Holmes, Nathaniel, 102
 Holmes, Sarah Eddy, 55
 Holmes, Thomas, 29
 Holmes, William, 150
 Howard, Abial, 24
 Hoyt, Edith, 56
 Humphrey, Frances A., 38, 45, 54, 72, 100
 Hunt, Dr. Will, 165

 Improvement Society, 70
 Incorporation (1734), 23
 Indians, 128
 Indian Trail, 37, 75, 114, 149
 Inglee's Store, 97, 121
 Iron Ore, 85, 87
 Iron Ore Brook, 87, 90
 Iron Ore Gultch, 87

 Jewett, Mrs., 99
 Jones, Elizabeth, 55
 Jones, J. L., 42, 55
 Jussila, Samuel, 73

 Keith, Ephraim, 24
 King, Alex, 97, 123
 King, David, 123
 King Philip, 127, 128
 King's Supermarket, 57, 83, 97
 Plaza, 153

 Kiwanis, 72
 Kitty's Restaurant, 153
 Krause, Fred, 102

 Landry, John, 55
 Lane, Frank, 153
 Latham Maps, 149, 169
 Leach, John, 24
 Leach, Simon, 128
 Leach, William, 63
 Leach's Landing, 85
 Leonard, Captain, 37
 Library, 55, 99
 rules and regulations, 58
 trustees, 55, 56
 Lindberg, Charles, 159
 Lions Club, 72
 Long Bridge, 150
 Lucas, Martin, 40
 Lunn, Alfred, Jr., 97, 116
 Lunn, Prof. Alfred, 97, 116
 Lyon, Bertha, 121
 Lyon, Charles P., 137, 138
 Lyon, Edwin, 29
 Lyon, Frank, 62, 97
 Lyon, George F., 63
 Lyonville, 136, 153

 Maki, Samuel, 73
 Malaney, Frank, 117
 Manor, Lakeview, 110
 Maps of Halifax
 1734, 168
 1832, 170
 Present-day, 171
 Marshall, Bert, 109
 Marston, Nymphus, 103
 Martin, Ceasar, 83
 Massasoit, 127
 Mayflower League, 63
 McVicar, James, 73
 Merton, Mrs., 101
 Militia Company, 61, 134, 135, 136, 137
 Ministers, 33
 Minor, Harry, 97, 123
 Minott, Irving, 82, 114
 Minott, Roland H., 82
 Monponsett Bridge, 150, 151
 Monponsett Brook, 94
 Monponsett Hotel, 61, 72, 128
 Monponsett Pond, 63, 72
 Morton's Corner, 153
 Morton, Eldridge, 29, 151
 Morton, Joanna, 50
 Morton, Nathaniel, 137
 Morton, Thomas D., 56, 69
 Morton, Mrs. T. D., 62, 103

- Nessralla Stand, 100
 New Ideas Club, 62

 Old Bridgewater Road, 102
 Old Colony Nursery, 96, 101, 103
 Ordinary Inn, 121
 Osbourne, Lucretia, 41
 Otto, Carl, 121
 Oxen, 159, 160

 Packard Bros., 121
 Packard's Pasture, 42
 Paine, Charles, 62, 136
 Palmer Saw Mill, 23, 91
 Paradise Lane, 104
 Parker, A. R., 107
 Parks
 Otto's, 121
 Richmond, 149
 Parent Teachers Association, 72
 Parris, Benjamin, 132, 133
 Patton, Reverend, 27
 Perkins, Nat, 97, 121
 Perry, O. B., 165
 Peterson, Hazel, 70
 Plymouth Trail, 75
 Plympton, 23
 Police Department, 81
 Poole, Eliah, 136
 Poole, John, 38, 79
 Poole, Sarah E., 67
 Pope, Mrs. Alexander, 165
 Pope, Nellie, 41, 73
 Pope's Tavern, 72, 100, 136
 Porter, C. G. M., 62
 Porter, H. M., 62, 63
 Porter, Jonathan, 134
 Post Office, 55, 79, 89, 99, 121
 Poultry, 96
 Pratt, Austin, 63
 Pratt, Otis, 62
 Primes, St. Clair, 62
 Pumery, Francis, 23

 Railroads, 103
 Halifax Station, 39
 Monponsett Station, 107
 Ramsdell, Herbert, 64, 82
 Ramseier, Edward, 99
 Raven Brook, 157
 Record Book (1792), 19
 Remick, Bertram, 64
 Revolutionary War Monument, 131, 132
 Richmond, Lucy, 63
 Rigo, Joseph, Sr., 97
 Ripley, Perez, 133
 Roache, Michael, 171

 Robinson, Bill, 165
 Rockland Trust Co., 97
 Route 58, 149
 Route 105, 149
 Rudolph, William, 153

 Sampson, Dominic, 52
 Schindler, Maurice, 72, 107
 Schindler, Molly, 107
 Schindler, Robert, 107
 Schools
 Cap'n Bos'ard's Wife's School, 45-54
 Central school, 40, 42 79
 Dame school, 35
 Easterly school, 37
 Elm Street school, 37
 First school, 35, 103
 Grover's Corner school, 37, 100
 High school, 41, 42
 Moving school, 35, 97
 Prudential committee, 37, 38, 40, 92
 Regional planning committee, 44
 School committee, 40, 41, 42, 44
 Sessions, 37
 Superintendent, 40
 Thompson Street school, 37
 Town Hall school, 41
 Transportation, 41, 42
 Traveling school, 35
 Scrow, Carmen, 123
 Sears, Holmes, 37
 Sears, Jonathan, 35, 99
 Sewing Circle, 61, 64, 65, 67
 Silver Lake, 8, 72, 153
 Pumping Station, 104
 Simpson, Fred, 55, 69, 97, 114
 Snake River, 87, 90
 Snell, Oliver, 38
 Snow's Lodge, 62
 Sodom Woods, 73
 Soule, Aroline, 65, 141
 Soule, Charles, 141
 Soule, Jabez, 29, 81
 Soule, John, 57, 141
 Soule, Nathan, 153
 Squeers, Mr., 46
 Standish, John, 132, 133
 Standish, Moses, 25, 27
 Stone Weir, 75, 87, 90, 149
 Stranger, Edward, 132, 133
 Stump Pond, 62, 72, 87, 90, 121
 Sturtevant, Ernest, 62, 167
 Sturtevant, George, 62, 114
 Sturtevant, Hannah, 27
 Sturtevant, Ira, 29, 41
 Sturtevant, Isaac, 107
 Sturtevant, James, 25, 150

- Sturtevant, John, 41, 101, 155
Sturtevant, Josiah, 26
Sturtevant, Paul, 110
Sturtevant, Samuel, 18, 23, 37, 132
Sturtevant, Seth, 132
Sturtevant, Simeon, 73
Sturtevant, Stafford, 38, 40, 45, 54, 100, 101
Sturtevant, William E., 73
Sturtevant, Zena, 38
Sturtevant's Sturdy Chicks, 97, 100
- Taft, Nellie I., 54, 101, 107
Taunton River, 140
Tetraut, Peter, 116
Tewksbury, Charles, 97
Thomas, Mrs. Albert, 73
Thomas, Hilda, 24, 56, 62
Thomas, Rev. James T., 56, 62, 69, 137
Thomas, Nettie, 57, 61, 67
Thompson, Mrs. Albert, 67
Thompson, Asa, 135
Thompson, Mrs. Cyrus, 65
Thompson, Elroy, 62, 101
Thompson, Ephrin B., 29
Thompson, Gilbert, 82
Thompson, Jabe, 42, 55, 62, 73
Thompson, John F., 41, 127, 128
Thompson, J. P., 63, 114
Thompson, Morton, 62, 63
Thompson, Noah, 131
Thompson, Samuel, 169
Thompson Street story, 73
Thompson, Zebediah, 79
Thomson, Barnabus, 24, 25
Thomson, Isaac, 23
Thomson, M. E., 37
Tillson, Abbie, 63
Tillson, Homer, 69, 167
Tillson, Leonard, 63
Tillson, Mrs. William, 67
Tillson, William, 69, 87, 160
Tinkham, Isaac, 24, 25
Tinkham, Nathan, 25
Tinkham Rock, 137
Tombs, 75
Tomson, Barnabus, 28, 150
Tomson cabin, 128
Tomson, Ebenezer, 27, 29, 133, 134
Tomson, Jacob, 26, 132
Tomson, John, 77, 104, 155
Tomson, Levi, 134
Tomson, Peter, 37
Tomson, Thomas, 24, 25
Toto's Restaurant, 107
Town Assembly, 42
Town Hall, 19, 41, 42, 55
Tramp house, 79
- Trunk Meeting House, 22
Turkey Swamp, 94
- Universalist Church, 153
Urann, Marcus, 167
Uston, John, 110
- Vaughan, Edwin H., 55, 124
Vault (Town Hall), 65
V.F.W. Building, 104
- Wampatuck, Josiah, 128
Wamsutta, 8, 107, 127, 128, 155
Washburn, Cephus, 140
Washburn, Chester, 79
Washburn, C. P. Lumber Co., 103
Washburn, Mary, 63
Washingtonians, 61, 62
Water Department, 82
Watering places, 77, 151
Waterman, Brad, 114
Waterman, Freeman, 133
Waterman, Isaac, 37
Waterman, John, 25, 132
Waterman, Leander, 40
Waterman, Priscilla, 49
Waterman, Robert, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29
Waterman, Samuel, 28
Waterman, Seth, 132
Waterman, William, 38
Watson, John, 117, 119
Watson, Joseph, 97
Webster, Daniel, 72, 135
White, C., 104
White family, 107
White, I. Q., 167
Whitney, Charles, 140
Widgeon Point, 72
Willet, Arthur, 123
Willet Store, 116
Willette, W. H., 56
Winchester, C. R., 104
Wine Brook Bog, 89, 114
Winnetuxet River, 150, 155, 171
Wood, Eben, 42, 61, 63, 70
Wood, Ebenezer, 75
Wood, Freddie, 63
Wood, Myron, 44
Wood, Judah, 132, 151
Wood, William, 94
Wood, Timothy, 24, 135
Woodcroft Farm, 99
World War I Honor Roll, 144
World War II Honor Roll, 145
- Young, Honorable Welcome, 38, 121
Young, Atty. William, 150



MAP FROM 1879



In his Introduction, Guy Baker discusses the various reasons why he has felt motivated to produce (in pictures and text) a history of Halifax.

“It has long been my continuing hope that the story of Halifax would someday be recorded in a readable and hopefully an interesting manner. Ours has been a long career as a township and we relinquish seniority to but few other townships in the entire community of Plymouth County, as well as other parts of early America.

“My association with my birthplace has gone on virtually uninterrupted for a goodly part of a century—more than three score years and ten, and approaching the time when I will admit to four score years of close association with Halifax, Massachusetts 02338.

“In the capacity of Town Historian, one receives many requests that place him squarely in the category of a genealogist. It’s a pleasant duty and a frequently rewarding one since I often come across snatches of information about Halifax and the people who lived here in the long ago. They had the ‘calling of the tune,’ so to speak and it has been very interesting to record their activities.

“In summary, I have turned back all of the pages of my material, beginning with the sketchy past that only the true Americans—the Indians—knew and lived and that we, in turn, have shaped into a tradition giving us the Hiawathas, Pocahontases, Wamsuttas, Massasoits and King Philips. The picture has been horrified at times with the shadow of the tomahawk and the scalp-taking which, incidentally, the white man introduced to the Indian. These things and more form the vague silhouette that was the very early America. Our hosts, the Indians, could have been more inhospitable as we stalked onto their land, flaunting our firing pieces and stealing their corn. I have reviewed the explorations of the early settlers as they followed the streams that flowed through the uplands to reach the coastline. Thus did Captain Jones find Silver Lake. The waterways were the avenues of adventure to the heartlands that made up this country. Wamsutta traveled the great river to sojourn on the island in our twin lakes. The Hobomocks spread out over the upper regions that held the headwater of the North River. And into the midst of this, the first settlers of Halifax laid their foundations for shelter and, soon, their permanent homes. Through the stream of humans who have passed this way there have been woven strains identifying backgrounds from far away. Such is the case with all of us, I suspect, and my own line has been intermingled with the hosts that make up the parade. I am a product of this grouping and what I put on these sheets is my digest as it has been processed in my head through this last three-quarters of a century. No causes or effects have been my aims—no desire to weigh the virtues of one period of time over another. I am not obsessed with the desire to compare—merely to get into recognizable form the many bits of information about our past that I have had the good fortune to come upon.”
